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Why do I live?

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The Author

WHY DO I LIVE?

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WHY DO I LIVE?

CHAPTER I.

THE TRUE END OF LIFE.

Apart from the teaching of God's word as to God's end in the creation and perpetuation of man, there is no greater mystery than human life. Make pleasure, happiness, self-interest, personal aggrandizement, or present sublunary enjoyment, the end of life, and man is an enigma, life a problem incapable of solution, the world a chaos of disordered, wild, conflicting elements, and all our reasoning a hopeless paradox. Man is then an atom of an atom world, tossed to and fro by every wind, whirled round by every eddy, borne along by every current, until he vanishes into the nothingness from which he inexplicably emerged. He is an effect causeless, a beginning without middle or end, a meteor flash brilliant with promised

glory, and extinguished in the very effulgence of its course.

Only when, in the light of God's word, we see life to be a probation, a discipline, a preparation, a labor, a strife, a conquest, an emancipation, a redemption; and the world to be the field and opportunity for working out glory and honor and immortality and eternal life—only then is sunlight thrown over the turbid chaos of human existence, every wave of trouble made to sparkle with beauty and roll in majestic harmony, and sin, sorrow, and toil—clothed in angel garments—transformed into ministering spirits sent forth to minister to heirs of immortality.

"Oh earth, thy maiden innocence
Too early fled, thy golden time—
O earth, earth, earth, for man's offence,
Doomed to dishonor in thy prime,
Of how much glory then bereft,
Yet what a world of good was left.

"The thorn, harsh emblem of the curse,
Puts forth a paradise of flowers;
Labor, man's punishment, is nurse
To halcyon joys at sunset hours;
Plague, famine, earthquake, want, disease,
Give birth to holiest charities.

"Whence came I? memory cannot say;
What am I? knowledge will not show;
Bound whither? ah, away, away,
Far as eternity can go:
Thy love to win, thy wrath to flee,
O God, thyself my helper be."

Oh how melancholy are the voices of humanity, of God-rejecting, Bible-defaming men! To what a depth of inconceivable degradation are men willing to plunge themselves and their whole race, rather than come to the light, and acknowledge their being's end and aim. Rather than not live like beasts, men have been found in all ages ready to herd with the beasts, to live and die as brutes, wallowing in pleasure, drinking in all uncleanness with greediness, spending their strength in excess of rioting, and taking as the motto of their creed, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

In speaking of Anacreon, Archbishop Potter remarks, that "the ancient poets were sometimes accustomed to introduce into their poems images of poverty, distress, and death, not to deter themselves or their readers from those gratifications which formed the principal enjoyment of their lives, but rather to prompt them

to seize the present moment and enjoy them all the more ravenously. It was like a passing cloud, which for a moment throws a shade over the landscape, but when it is past and gone, makes the scene by contrast appear more beautiful and desirable than before."

"Fit companions, you and I,
Heedless of the dim to-morrow;
Caring not how soon we die,
Scoffing both at joy and sorrow."

This witness is true: and so far did the desire of thus heightening present felicity prevail, that a skeleton was once set up at a feast to make the merry-makers more intensely sensible of their existence and their pleasure. But alas, poor mortals! It was play to them, in the hour of sunshine, to call at their own wills for the *images* of affliction and of death; but what did they, what could they do, when, *against* their wills, affliction and death came upon them in substance and in power?

Labor for the meat which perisheth, for the gold and silver which canker, for houses and lands that soon know us no more for ever, for the beggarly elements of earth which we cannot carry away with us, this—Oh, thank God—

this is not the work of the Christian. This is a part of that vanity to which man has been not willingly made subject—of that curse under which he and the earth from which he seeks his daily bread, now lie—and such the weary, heavy-laden, discontented heart of humanity feels it to be. For while a materialistic philosophy is ever shouting out for the dignity and nobility of mere material labor, the weary limbs and sweating brow, the empty home and rankling cares, the too often hungry unfilled stomach and ragged body, the aching heart, the pining sickness, and the worn-out, exhausted frame of the laborer, give the lie to its vain babblings. No, O no; man was not made for earth. Man's interest is not buried in the bowels of the earth. Man was not created to spend his strength in gaining a morsel of bread, or to throw away his energies, like the child at play upon the sea-shore, in heaping together the sand and shells that lie scattered around him, and which the first wave will wash back into the deep. To eat, drink, and be merry, is not the life of a MAN, but of a brute that perishes. This is the maxim of a philosophy that knows not God, and of men who live as atheists

in the world, "without God and without hope," "whose god is their belly, and who glory in their shame." Neither can wealth give man worth, nor money impart to him any one feature of beauty, one trait of loveliness, or one ray of happiness. Nor is occupation life; for it may be laborious idleness and unprofitable toil, which bring no solace to the quenchless longings of the heart of man. Man is immortal, and these all perish in the using, "take wings and fly away," or are reluctantly left behind to follow only in their eternal reckonings.

"I went one day into a barn," says the Rev. William Jay, of Bath, "where I found a thrasher at his work. I addressed him in the words of Solomon: 'My friend, in all labor there is some profit.' But what was my surprise, when, leaning on his flail, he answered, and with much energy, 'No, sir; that is the truth, but there is one exception to it: I have long labored in the service of sin, but I got no profit by my labor.' 'Then,' answered I, 'you know somewhat of the apostle's meaning when he asked, 'What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' 'Thank God,' he replied, 'I do; and I also know, that now, being freed from

sin, and having become a servant unto righteousness, I have my fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.'"

The late Mr. Stephen Girard, looking at this subject not in the light of Scripture, but as Solomon did, in the light of his own experience and success, and when surrounded by immense wealth he was supposed to be taking supreme delight in its accumulation, wrote to a friend, "As to myself, I live like a galley-slave, constantly occupied, and often passing the night without sleeping. I am wrapped in a labyrinth of affairs, and worn out with care. I do not value fortune. The love of labor is my highest emotion. When I rise in the morning, my only effort is to labor so hard during the day, that when the night comes I may be enabled to sleep soundly."

Even the proper employments, and the rational and permitted enjoyments of earth, are not therefore the end for which man was chiefly made, but helps and encouragements to duty; means for the accomplishment of the end; or rather, they are the conditions in which humanity subsists and is capable of fulfilling its high and holy purpose. They do not end man, nor

does man end with them. They do not satisfy man. They leave him hungry, thirsty, greedy after some satisfying good. Man looks above and beyond and away from them all, and feels that if he has it not, he *ought to have*, a happiness better than these can give. His powers and faculties culminate towards a higher object, and a more enduring and satisfying blessedness.

For a man to say, I am made capable of pleasure and of pursuing business, and therefore in these I will find my chief good, is as if a tree should say, "I live merely to eliminate sap from the earth, and its circulation through my fibres is my enjoyment and what I live for;" or as if another tree should say, "I live to produce branches and leaves;" or another, "I live to bring forth buds, but no fruit;" or another, "I live to bring forth fruit, but not to ripen it;" and as if all the trees should affirm that in these things they find their satisfaction. But to such an epicurean claim every man would reply, that the ripening of good fruit, according to its kind, is the end for which God caused fruit-bearing trees to be brought forth from the earth, and that when they do not accomplish this end, they

live to no purpose, they cumber the ground, they are good for nothing, and should be cut down and burned.

God made man and gave him understanding beyond that of the beasts that perish, in order that he might serve and glorify Him by doing his will, and "bearing fruit unto God." God is holy, and man therefore must be holy in thought, word, and disposition. God is righteous, and man therefore must obey his law, or suffer the penalty of disobedience. God is love, and man therefore must love God and obey him in heart, and love him supremely, always, and with all his soul. And now that man is a sinner, and God has so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life, man must show his gratitude and love by living not unto himself, but unto Him who loved him and gave himself for him, by living for his glory, and so as to become like him, and thereby holy and happy. Such is the END of man's being in this world.

In order to the fulfilment of this end, the body with all its powers, in union with the mind and all its capacities, and all the influence,

ability, and opportunity with which man is intrusted, are THE MEANS. Through the abounding goodness of God, who giveth to all liberally, these means, in their very use and exercise, afford sensible delight; that is, when used and not abused or perverted—when used as *means*, and in subordination to the *end*. Then they increase man's power of fulfilling that end, and recompense him with manifold consolations in his travail. But when they are used as *ends*, as in themselves the purpose of life and the design of man's being, they are perverted so as to entail misery and death. When men thus abuse God's goodness, long-suffering, forbearance, patience, and manifold gifts, evil flows out of what was in itself good—sickness out of health, pain out of pleasure, sorrow out of joy, satiety and disgust out of desires inordinately indulged, death out of life, and tears, misery, and despair out of what might have been comfort and enjoyment. Man, in this case, is like those trees. He lives for himself and his own pleasure—for his least and lowest pleasures, and for only a part, and the meanest part of his nature. He does not fulfil THE END of his being, for which God made and

endowed him. He refuses to bear fruit for God. He is a cumberer of the ground, and in due time God will say, "Cut him down."

This was the very lesson taught by our Saviour in his curse of the barren fig-tree. In it he showed men what they ought to be, and what they must be, or sink into everlasting destruction. Men have intelligence. They are moral and accountable beings. They know God's will and law. These God has imprinted upon their hearts and written in his word. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind," is the very law of man's being, and the very end of his loving disposition, and his capacity to discern love and loveliness in others, and above all, in God. Not so using the heavenly gifts, men sin and are guilty. Yea, the more stupid they make themselves, the more guilty they become. And when the tree for whose sake they as branches are spared, is cut down; when the family for whose comfort they are permitted to live, is removed; when the church and community have received from them whatever benefit they may for a season confer; and when they have filled up the measure of their iniquity, they will

be cut off as unprofitable branches, and cast into the fire "that shall never be quenched."

My dear reader, every gift you have, whether of body or of mind, is from God, and is God's talent committed to your trust. Each is of its own kind. It is like seed, to be sown in soil congenial to it, so as to produce for God the greatest amount of fruit. Or it is like money, to be so employed as to secure the greatest recompense. Among these talents, the greatest are those by which you can love, serve, and glorify God; and hence, all other gifts and capacities must be subordinated to the full development and profitable increase of these. To do otherwise is to rob God, and to live in open rebellion against him. And do not men act towards God as they do towards no other person, and this only because they do not see him and realize his presence? They feel that they must be honest in their dealings, tell the truth, obey those who employ and reward them, and do all that they have engaged to perform to men. A man that does not do this, soon finds himself in want and misery. But God is also a person. He that made us must be like us, though infinitely above us. He who gave us a will, must

possess a will. He who gave us personality, must also have it in himself. He who gave us feeling and love, and every other affection, must himself possess a moral nature. You do not, it is true, see him. But you do not see your distant customer. You only occasionally see your employer, and not at all if he is absent. Subjects seldom see their monarchs, or citizens their legislators and rulers. And yet men feel bound to deal fairly and honestly with all those, however remote, with whom they are concerned.

So it is with God. You know HE exists because *you* exist. You know he is spiritual, because you have a soul, and think, and reason. You know he is holy, because you have a sense of right which you approve, and of wrong which you condemn. And you know you ought to love and obey Him who made and governs you, and gave you his law and every good and perfect gift. Now if you do not do this, God must treat you accordingly, and inflict upon you the penalty of wilful disobedience, dishonesty, and defiance. This is the way you would treat any one who, as a child, a servant, or otherwise employed, should act towards you as you do tow-

ards God. Wherein, therefore, "thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself;" and "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

The END of your life God has made very plain. "No man liveth for himself." Even as it is *in* God you live and move, so it is *for* God you live and have your being. And however you may *live* unto yourself, to your body, or to your appetites, certain it is that "no man dieth to himself." You must then die unto God, live as you may. God has appointed your birth and your death. Your spirit must return to God who gave it. Your body must await, in the grave, a resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt, or to glory and honor—to damnation, or to salvation. You *must*, after death, meet God's judgment, the rule of which will be this end of your being made known to you in his word, and according to which you will receive righteous judgment.

It is a supposition as false as it is common, and as fatal as it is false, that because sinners do not wish to have Christ to reign over them, therefore they are not under his dominion and power. You are. He made you. He gave you the light of life and the light of under-

standing. He preserves you. He redeemed and bought you. God gave you to him, and requires you to honor and obey him. All things in heaven and on earth are subject to him, and will be subdued under him. God judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and you must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Oh, my dear reader, there is a way of seeking life and yet losing it, and a way of losing life and yet finding it. Put this present bodily life first, and the spiritual life last; make the body your first care, and your soul subordinate; give the world your first thoughts and cares and labors and anxieties and sacrifices, and Christ only the weak and exhausted remains; live and labor and enjoy yourself in the world, and come to Christ, to prayer, and to the church sleepy, worn-out, incapable of thought: do this, and you lose your life, lose your happiness, lose your peace, lose your consolation and joy, and run the fearful hazard of losing your soul.

"Seek not thy frame's corruption to control,
But build a lasting mansion for thy soul."

Health is a blessing when it is really blest, as life is when it is lived aright. But neither of

them are in themselves or necessarily blessings, for we find that in their fullest enjoyment "man never *is*, but always *to be* blest." A man, however, may be, and often is blest without health. The best and most useful lives have sometimes been the sickliest; and the feeblest body has often encompassed the happiest as well as the holiest spirit. In weakness such are made strong; in infirmities they glory; in tribulations they rejoice; out of the deepest depths they cry unto God, and he comforteth them, even as he did Jonah in the "belly of hell," Daniel in the lion's den, Joseph in prison, the three youths in the fiery furnace, Paul and Silas in the innermost prison fastened with stocks and chains, and John on the lonely isle of Patmos. When the poor body is racked with pain, the soul is often strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Often when the lips quiver with agony, they at the same time praise the Lord for his wonderful goodness. When the whole body shakes with spasmodic pain, and is torn as if by red-hot pincers, the soul can "sit and sing herself away" to the anticipated enjoyment of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. The spirit, "in the secret place

of the Most High," receives beauty for its ashes, the oil of joy for its mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and while without is pain and misery, she wraps this garment around her, and looking upward from the things seen and temporal to the things unseen and eternal, rejoices in hope of the glory of God. Yea, man may do all that he can do to injure the believer's frail body. He may unjustly imprison it, deprive it of air and food, torture it, crucify it, gibbet and kill it. But he cannot prevent the free spirit, nerved with divine power, from rising triumphant over all his terrors, and proving a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through Him that hath loved him and given himself for him.

> "For love puts on an angel's power,
> And faith grows mightier than the grave."

As I hope then, dear reader, that you are thus sanctified by Christ to his service and glory, O remember by how many bonds of gratitude and duty you are bound to him and under obligation to be his, his only, his wholly, his in life, his in death, and his for ever.

"Lights of the Lord are we,
And shine by his command,
Reflecting beams of deity
Like stars in his right hand."

While diligent in business, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; glorifying him in your calling, honoring him with your substance—"the first-fruits of all your increase"—and thus ennobling toil, sanctifying labor, elevating the meanest employments, from the degradation of the curse experiencing a blessing, and even out of the mammon of unrighteousness making friends, "that they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

"This, then, is the Christian's work,
This can make his life sublime;
And departing, leave behind him
Footprints on the sands of time:

"Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main—
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother—
Seeing, may take heart again.

"Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any toil,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Till we reach the heavenly soil."

CHAPTER II.

WHY CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TAKEN AT ONCE TO HEAVEN.

Such being the chief end of life—to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever—the care-worn, wearied pilgrim often asks, Why am I still detained on earth, and not at once sanctified, made meet for heaven, and received up to glory? Assuredly it is not because earth is better than heaven.

Our Saviour thought not so. "And now, O Father," says Christ, in his last prayer, "glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." It was because He ever saw as present, and as fully and gloriously accomplished, the "travail of his soul," that he "endured the cross, despising the shame." Having finished the work that God gave him to do, it was expedient for us that he should go away; and he tells us that we should rejoice because he said, I go to my Fa-

ther, since he went to prepare a place for his people. Now, as Christ is the fountain of infinite blessedness—the Sun of righteousness—to be where he is, is to be like him, to be satisfied, to be changed into his glory, to be filled with fulness of joy for evermore. This surely is better than any possible earthly condition.

"A pilgrim through this lonely world,
The blessed Saviour passed:
A mourner all his life was he,
A dying Lamb at last.

"That tender heart that felt for all,
For all its lifeblood gave;
It found on earth no re ting-place,
Save only in the grave."

"We that are in this tabernacle," says the apostle Paul, "do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." He desired therefore "to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Thus also thought "the great cloud of witnesses" that have preceded us, and by whom we are now surrounded. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but

having seen them afar off; and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth." They "desired a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God was not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city."

God does not intend that our happiness should result from any thing in this present life. He does indeed desire to secure our happiness while *in* the world, but not *from* it. And he would make us happy while in the world only by delivering us from its power, by making us independent of it, by inspiring us with the hope of a better inheritance, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away; by the experience of his favor which is life, and his loving-kindness which is better than life; by enabling us to glory in tribulations also, knowing that though while in the world we must have tribulation, yet Christ who has gone before us has overcome the world, and makes all its manifold trials work together even while here for good to them that love him, and to work out for them hereafter an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

"The soul, reposing on this sure belief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,
Forgets her labor as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and breaks into a song."

This is the ultimate and certain recompense of all who enroll themselves under the Captain of our salvation. This is the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. This is the crown of righteousness which he will give to all them that love his appearing. This is the full, final, and complete salvation which he secures for his beloved ones. "If I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

"My soul, go boldly forth,
Forsake this sinful earth;
What hath it been to thee
But pain and sorrow?
And think'st thou it will be
Better to-morrow?

"Why art thou for delay?
Thou cam'st not here to stay;
What tak'st thou for thy part
But heavenly pleasure?
Where then should be thy heart,
But where 's thy treasure?

"Thy God, thy Head's above;
There is the world of love;
Mansions there purchased are,
By Christ's own merit;
For these he doth prepare
Thee by his Spirit."

CHAPTER III.

WHAT WOULDST THOU HAVE ME TO DO?

We have seen, that while it is gloriously true that heaven is our home, so that Christians rejoice only "in hope of the glory of God"—for otherwise they would be "of all men most miserable"—yet it is the will and purpose of Christ, that those whom he has called by his Spirit and grace should, for a season, remain upon the earth. "I pray not," said he in the farewell prayer with his disciples, "that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

This, in connection with what precedes and follows it in this memorable prayer, John 17, is very remarkable language. It declares of every Christian that he was the chosen and called of God, and that he is His in a double sense and by a twofold property; that he was given by the Father to Christ; that Christ has given to him eternal life; that by power imparted to him he has received Christ, recognized his infinite authority, believed upon him,

found in him life, peace, justification, and the disposition and strength to present himself unto God in body, soul, and spirit, which are his, and to live unto Him that loved him, and gave himself for him. It teaches us concerning all such, that they keep Christ's word, and know surely that he came from the Father; that they are the Father's, and also Christ's, and that Christ is glorified in them; that Christ keeps them, so that none of them are lost; that his joy is fulfilled in them; that they are not of the world, even as he was not of the world; that they are sanctified; that the glory which the Father gave to Christ, he has given them; that Christ is in them as God is in him, that they may be made perfect in him; that Christ loves them even as God loved him; that it is the will of Christ that they also be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory, and that the love wherewith the Father has loved him may be in them, and he in them. Such is that strain of mingled precept, promise, warning, and prayer in which our blessed Saviour took leave of his people when on earth; "from which the weary and the sick-hearted of all ages shall gather strength and consolation, and which shall be

read in chambers of death and houses of mourning, until death and sorrow shall reign no more."

Professing Christian, have you weighed the import of these wondrous facts? Pause, and reflect upon them. On you, in eternity, the eye of God the Father rested in infinite love. The covenant of grace—the counsel of peace—numbered you among the chosen ones. From the moment of your entrance into life, over you God's gracious providence has continually watched. In his own good time and way, his Spirit brooded over that soul of thine which lay still and insensible to all spiritual and divine life. You were awakened to the consciousness of some secret, indefinable emotions. Thoughts of sin and guilt and death and judgment and eternity occupied your mind. An unutterable void seemed to have been created in that heart, once so filled with pride, selfishness, vanity, and lusts. You felt yourself to be the prodigal. You seemed to yourself to sit alone, miserably clad with torn and filthy rags which exposed the shame of your nakedness; hungry, with none to give you meat; thirsty, with none to give you drink. You

were covered with self-reproach at the remembrance of your ingratitude and vileness. Thoughts of God's love and mercy, as in Christ Jesus he is now reconciling sinners unto himself; thoughts of that Father's house with its many mansions and its perfect blessedness; thoughts of the rich provisions of his grace, the feast of fat things, of the bread and wine and milk, so freely and plentifully given, without money and without price; thoughts of Christ, and of his infinite tenderness and pitiful compassion for the very chief of sinners; thoughts of your own unnatural ingratitude, and vile unworthy conduct: these in tumultuous commotion filled your soul, and led you to cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?"

As you thus lay prostrate and helpless, cast out and abominable, an eye of infinite pity looked down upon you, an arm of infinite love and mercy was stretched out to you, a voice from heaven cried out to you, "Live! Live!" and with it was imparted a spirit of power disposing and enabling you to obey. You arose. You lifted up your eyes, and, filled with gratitude divine, cast yourself into the arms of Him

who calleth the wanderer from darkness unto light, and who came to seek and save you when thus lost, wretched, and undone. Infinite pity touched his heart and beamed from his eye of love—that heart which wept at the grave of Lazarus, that eye which shed tears of sorrow over Jerusalem—and your heart, hard and unfeeling as a stone, was melted into tenderness; godly sorrow brought tears into eyes unused to weep; words of grateful thanksgiving came struggling for utterance, and your full soul burst into a song, exclaiming,

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Could my tears for ever flow,
Could my zeal no respite know,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling,
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Vile, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Oh, how happy you felt as your darkness and doubts disappeared, and you were permitted to see, amid the gloomy clouds which rolled

darkly round about you, a throne of grace, a Father's smiling countenance, a living, loving, interceding, and almighty Saviour! Experience taught you that as

"Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
So all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan."

It was not difficult then to make the language of the church yours, and to shout aloud,

"Grace, 't is a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear."

It was not difficult then to say with the apostle, "I thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead, that henceforth they who live, should not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again." Oh no, you felt that you were "not your own;" that you had been "dead and were alive again," that you had been lost and were found; that you had been bought with an unspeakable price, that the heart-love of Christ to you cost him his heart's blood; and that therefore in making an unreserved consecration of your powers of body and of mind as a living sacrifice unto the Lord,

it was a poor, though willing offering, gratefully presented with the earnest cry, "Lord, here am I! what wouldst thou have me to do?" And then, as you read Christ's will in his word "given for your instruction," you heard in distinct, authoritative, and all-persuasive accents the voice of that divine Redeemer who restored, renewed, and new-created you. Pointing to his church and to the world around, he said, "Go into my vineyard and work." You heard the voice. You listened and obeyed. And falling down at the foot of the cross you exclaimed, "My time, O Lord, is but an inch, and thou hast lengthened it out a span long. So teach me to consider my days, and thy purpose in prolonging them, as to apply my heart to that wisdom which will make me wise unto my own salvation, and wise also to win souls to THEE. Here I am, O Lord, help me to feel at thy disposal. Work in me the right disposition, and then dispose of me as thou wilt. Make me faithful in all thy holy and sacred services, confident of thy goodness in all events, watchful to please thee in all my ways, and anxious to live to thee, to die in thee, and be for ever with thee."

CHAPTER IV.

GO WORK IN MY VINEYARD.

My dear reader, if this has been your experience, your surrender, and your covenant, then are you the Lord's. Of you he now says, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are mine, and I am glorified in them. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. Sanctify them through thy truth. As thou hast sent me into the world"—to finish the work thou gavest me to do—"even so have I also sent them into the world."

Yes, Christian, this is the object for which Christ has kept you in the world. As our Saviour, model, Master, and guide glorified His Father on earth, and finished the work given him to do, so must you. This life you now enjoy at his hands, he consecrated as one of work, diligence, activity, and toil. It is not, however,

work for man, but for God, to which you are devoted. It is not labor for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, to which you are called. It is not for earthly riches you are to give diligence, but for those riches which endure for ever, and which can never take to themselves wings and fly away. It is not strife for worldly honors that is required, but for that glory, honor, and immortality which come from God.

This world, which had been the theatre of godless iniquity and Satanic rule, Christ has made the scene on which God is to be glorified, Satan dethroned, and man redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled. Of this glorious dominion Christ laid the foundation when, by the eternal Spirit, he once for all offered upon the altar of his divine nature a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

On this rock Christ established his throne; and in the exercise of the power and authority given him in heaven and upon earth, erected his kingdom, and instituted its laws, its ordinances, and its means of grace. Having done this, he returned to his home on high, to that glory which he had with the Father from be-

fore the foundation of the world. And there he ever lives to make intercession for us. Yes, blessed be his glorious name, he lives by his presence to bless, by his Spirit to conquer, by his word to guide, and by his providence to overrule. He ever lives as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins. Clothed with this universal empire, Christ must reign and overturn and overturn, until the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—until the heathen shall be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession—until every enemy is destroyed, and every soul of man, of every age and country, shall have been redeemed by his grace, or have for ever perished with his foes.

This then is the object, if you are indeed the Lord's, for which you have been spared, and continued in the world, and preserved alive until the present hour.

The life that you enjoy is a life to be lived by faith—faith in the precepts, promises, and supreme authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not your own, nor for your own pleasure

and profit, nor for your own disposal and glory. For *you* to live is Christ. It is to feel that you are redeemed with precious blood, to feel that you are what the apostle loves to call himself, Christ's servant, yea, his bondsman. It is to feel that "holiness to the Lord" is written on that body of yours; upon that strength and activity you enjoy; upon that intellect you possess; upon your wife and children and family; upon your silver and your gold, which although yours, are nevertheless the Lord's; upon your business; upon those houses and lands and stocks, and property of whatever kind, which are intrusted to your stewardship, and for the right use and improvement of which for his glory and the good of men, you must render an account to God. In short, to be truly and savingly the Lord's, is to feel that, since through his infinite goodness all things whether on earth or in heaven are yours, so you, and all that you possess, are, and ought to be, his; that you are a part of "the travail of his soul," the purchase of his death, a partaker of his life, a member of his body, and an instrument of his mercy towards others.

Thus it is that Christ looks upon you with

unspeakable tenderness, and jealous fear. "I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

Such is life, to every true, living, loving, and loyal Christian. Such are his views of its holy sacredness. He looks upon it as Christ's, as an opportunity to work for Christ, and to do his will, even as he worked for and did the will of his Father, not from constraint but willingly, counting it even his meat and drink thus to spend and be spent. The true Christian therefore regards the church and the world as the sphere in which this work for Christ is to be accomplished.

"I pray not," says Christ to his Father, "that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them"—that is, consecrate, set them apart, devote them in heart and

spirit to thy service—"Sanctify them through thy truth: THY WORD is truth." And therefore Christ continues in his solemn utterance, As thou hast sent me into the world to do thy will, and not my own, and thus to glorify thee upon the earth, "even so have I also sent them into the world," that is, that they may do my will and not their own, and thus glorify ME upon the earth. "And for their sakes"—that I may be to them a living example, pattern, and teacher, and at the same time their living Head and source of power and life—"I sanctify," or devote "myself, that they also might be sanctified" through me. And then embracing in his omniscient and eternal vision the whole future of time, the divine Intercessor adds, "Neither pray I for these alone; but for all them also who shall"—hereafter to the end of the world—"believe on me through their word" and instrumentality.

O Christian, how unspeakably solemn is the consecration which Christ makes of you to God and to his service in the world! Surely you are bound by the blood of an everlasting covenant. The vows of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ are upon you. By all

that is sacred in that Saviour's love and life and sufferings and death, and in this his last interceding prayer, you are constrained to live not unto yourself, but unto Him who died for you, and rose again for your justification.

O how does Christ, in this solemnly affecting prayer, draw every disciple into the nearest and tenderest communion with himself! How does he imbue them with his own spirit! How does he teach them that as he came into the world not to condemn but to save it, even so are they continued in the world to be his representatives and agents for the completion of this mission of love; and that so far as they partake with him in the self-denial, sacrifice, and sorrow it involves, they shall also be partakers with him in its everlasting glory.

Well then may every true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ say,

"Here is my heart; my God, I give it thee;
I heard thee call and say,
'Not to the world, my child, but unto me,'
I heard and will obey.
Here is love's offering to my King,
Which a glad sacrifice I bring,
Here is my heart.

"Here is my heart; surely the gift, though poor,
My God will not despise;
Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
To meet thy searching eyes;
Corrupted first in Adam's fall,
The stains of sin pollute it all,
My guilty heart.

"Here is my heart—my heart so hard before,
Now by thy grace made meet;
Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
Its anguish at thy feet;
It groans beneath the weight of sin,
It sighs salvation's joy to win:
My mourning heart.

"Here is my heart; in Christ its longings end,
Near to his cross it draws:
It says, 'Thou art my portion, O my Friend,
Thy blood my ransom was.'
And in the Saviour it has found
What blessedness and peace abound;
My trusting heart.

"Here is my heart: ah, Holy Spirit, come,
Its nature to renew,
And consecrate it wholly as thy home,
A temple fair and true.
Teach it to love and serve thee more,
To fear thee, trust thee, and adore:
My cleansed heart.

"Here is my heart; it trembles to draw near
The glory of thy throne:
Give it the shining robe thy servants wear,
Of righteousness thine own;
Its pride and folly chase away,
And all its vanity, I pray:
My humble heart.

"Here is my heart; teach it, O Lord, to cling
In gladness unto thee;
And in the day of sorrow still to sing,
'Welcome my God's decree.'
Believing, all its journey through,
That thou art wise, and just, and true:
My waiting heart.

"Here is my heart: O Friend of friends, be near,
To make each tempter fly;
And when my latest foe I wait with fear,
Give me the victory:
Gladly on thy love reposing,
Let me say when life is closing,
Here is my heart."

CHAPTER V.

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF THE WORLD.

"You see your calling, brethren." It is indeed a high calling, high as heaven, glorious as the glory which the Only-begotten has returned to share in the bosom of the Father. But it is not the calling which many would make it. It is not a calling *out* of the world, but a calling *in* the world. It is not a negative piety, that is satisfied with avoiding evil and observing ordinances, rites, and ceremonies, the traditions of men. It is a living, loving, active, working piety—a piety which does not retire from the world in order to be holy, but is holy and heavenly while occupying that world as its field of duty. The true Christian does not resemble the secluded and sickly hot-house plant. Far otherwise. His is a piety like the live-oak tree, which takes root in the fields and meadows and public ways, and amid every windy storm and tempest thrives, and matures in majestic symmetry and strength. In the frosts of

winter and in the heats of summer, it preserves its living freshness and its undecaying verdure; and becomes a shadow of rest to the weary, and an object of admiration and delight to all.

"Thus in believing hearts heaven's root doth spring
Unheeded, there to drink celestial air;
And all the thoughts to her obedience bring,
Nourished day after day with dew of prayer;
Unseen, unknown, shrouded with many a care,
And scarce discernible to fleshly eye;
More and more bowed to earth, and hiding there;
But soon, released, its stature fills the sky,
And soars the angelic child of immortality."

It is nevertheless true of the life of the Christian, that it is not a calling which the world appreciates or approves. That world is the very object set before it as the field of labor. The Christian lives in and with the world, that amid its darkness he may be a light, and so let his influence, character, and example shine around him in all the sphere of his acquaintance, that others seeing his good works, and seeing in them the truth and power of divine grace, may glorify his Father who is in heaven. The Christian is continued in the world, and mingled up with it by his relations and his business, that in the midst of its impurity he may

be as salt, purifying and preserving it; and that, while men are alienated from God by unholy and unbelieving hearts, he may also, as a leaven, silently, imperceptibly, but effectively, turn them from darkness to light and from Satan unto God.

The glory of God is thus the end for which, as a Christian, you are continued in life, just as it was the original end of your creation. To refuse to live for this, or to make this a minor and subordinate object of your life, is to transgress the great law of your creation, frustrate the design of your present existence, and leave unfulfilled the purpose of Him who hath called you. It is to live unto yourself, and so as to please yourself, and not unto Him who bought you with the price of his own blood. And it is to dishonor Christ before those whom you ought to save from the error of their ways. Instead of being salt to the world, you thus become like salt that has lost its savor, and is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. You become like leaven which is itself unleavened and powerless. While you ought to be a light set up for the purpose of pointing out the path to travellers, or to guide the mariner amid dangerous

rocks, your light has become so dim as not to be perceptible, and serves rather to bewilder and destroy. Forget not then that you are "SET for the defence of the gospel," and the glory of its great Redeemer. To love him yourself with all your heart, to live to him with all your powers, and to render him lovely and attractive in the estimation of others, by proving that his yoke is easy, his burden light, and his service great reward, this is the end of your life.

How false and worthless is that sentimental piety which shrinks from all contact with the world; which regards the business and cares of life as hinderances to its growth; which imagines that it can flourish only in retirement, seclusion, and selfish inactivity; and fancies it cannot be fervent in spirit, serving God, while diligent in business and active in duty. Plant that live oak, to which we have likened piety, in the richest soil, water it, watch over it, defend it from the storm, preserve it from the heat, shelter and nourish it as you would a hot-house plant, and what is the result? It weakens, and becomes puny and "good for nothing." But give it air; let it have the sunshine and the breeze; let the dews of night refresh it, and the showers by

day water it; let the buffetings of the storm and the rude assaults of the thoughtless passenger strengthen its limbs, and strike its roots deeper and wider in the earth; let its roots drink in nourishment from the soil, and its leaves from the air, until they glisten with polished beauty, and then you have a "tree of the Lord," the monarch of the forest. Prune the branches of any tree close to the young stem, and what becomes of it? It sickens, dies, or is unnaturally dwarfed. So it is with the Christian. The incorruptible seed must be allowed to shoot up and grow in the clear sky, under the rays of the Sun of righteousness, watered by the dews of the Spirit, strengthened by the cares and labors of life, deriving lustre and power from all around it. Then will it become fruitful in holiness; in doing good, get good; in blessing others, be blessed; in living unto God, blossom and bear fruit even unto old age, flourishing in the courts of the Lord.

Oh no, my dear reader, you have not, I trust, so learned Christ, if haply you have found him, and know that in him is life. Living in Christ, is living *as* Christ lived, and *where* Christ lived; going about doing good as Christ did; and doing

the will of God as he did. It is not living to ourselves, for our own pleasure and profit, or according to our own will, our own opinions, and the custom and example of others, even though they may be professors of religion. It is denying ourself, our self-will, and all that constitutes our naturally sinful self. It is denying ourselves what self and the world might approve. It is "taking up our cross," and against all natural disposition and desires, "following Christ" in all the lanes of the city, in all the surrounding highways, and "into all the world," "doing good unto all men as we have opportunity." Living unto Christ is to feel that life is "work," and that work ought to be "worship;" that the field is the world; that the Christian is a laborer, a coworker, a sower, a reaper, and an ingatherer; that "the soul is dead that slumbers" or lives in pleasure, or for the meat that perisheth, or for fame, or honor, or wealth, or for "heirs he knows not who;" that "life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal."

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end and way,
But to act that each to-morrow
Find us better than to-day."

As the Father sent Christ into the world, and gave him a work to do, so is every one who is called by Christ sent into the world, and kept for a season in it, to do a work for him, to work while the day lasts, and to work with his might. Yes; true piety, the calling of the Christian, is an active, diligent, and laborious work. It calls into activity the hands, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, that glory of man; the feet, those carriers of man; the head and the heart, the understanding, the memory, and the will; the prudence, wisdom, and sagacity; the forethought and caution; the energy, fortitude, and endurance; the activity, enterprise, and boldness: and all these that they may be exercised amid the bustling cares and tumultuous conflict of the world.

——— "This life of mine
Must be lived out, and the grave thoroughly earned."

And yet, while it is true that every capacity of body and every faculty of mind is demanded for this labor, the work of the Christian is not a worldly work. While the scene of its effort is on earth, it is not an earthly work. It is in the world, and yet not of it. It is on the earth, and yet not earthly, sensual, or selfish. It is

Christian, because it is Christ's work. It is divine, because it seeks the glory of God. It is spiritual, because it looks not to the things that are seen and temporal, but to the things which are unseen and eternal. And it is soul work, because it aims at working out our own salvation and the salvation of others, at winning souls for Christ, and bringing many prodigals home to God.

> "Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
> Not light them for themselves.
>
> Mark Him, who though by seraph hosts adored,
> Yet to earth's lowest cares is still awake."

CHAPTER VI.

THIS WORLD OUR FIELD OF DUTY AND OF TRIAL.

HERE then, in the world, you have lived as the servant of sin and Satan; to the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life; seeking your own things, and not the things that are of God. And *here*, in this same world, you must work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure, undoing the evil you have done; living as a witness and an example of piety; learning to do well, to eschew evil, and to fly temptation; escaping the corruptions that are in the world through lust; keeping yourself unspotted by them; mortifying the body; subduing inordinate affection; controling and governing the temper; cultivating spiritual-mindedness; and having thoughts, will, and wishes brought into captivity and obedience to the will of Christ.

"Still keep the end in view,
Tarry nor turn aside;
Perils, allurements, bonds break through,
Most faithful when most tried."

For your own benefit there is *a needs be* that you should go to the land of promise by the way of the Red sea, through the wilderness, with all its drought and dread—its bitter waters, its bleak and barren deserts, its dreadful mountains, its wild and ruthless robbers, its fiery scorpions, its heat by day and its cold by night—rather than by the direct and easier way through the plain. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering, and through much tribulation must you also enter the kingdom.

"I 'm but a stranger here—
Heaven is my home.
Earth is a desert drear—
Heaven is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
Round me on every hand;
Heaven is my fatherland—
Heaven is my home.

"What though the tempests rage—
Heaven is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage—
Heaven is my home.
And time's wild wintry blast
Soon shall be overpast;
I shall reach home at last—
Heaven is my home.

"There at my Saviour's side—
Heaven is my home;
I shall be glorified—
Heaven is my home.
There are the good and blest,
Those I loved most and best;
And there I too shall rest—
Heaven is my home.

"Therefore I murmur not—
Heaven is my home.
Whate'er my earthly lot,
Heaven is my home.
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord's right hand;
Heaven is my fatherland,
Heaven is my home."

But before you thus enter upon this rest which remaineth for you—here in this world, where you have been so long an idler, an unprofitable servant, living as the multitude do not *for* but *against Christ*—here "for a season" you must serve an apprenticeship to "the heavenly calling;" "endure hardness;" labor with your might; gird up the garments of ease and sloth and fashion; "lay aside every weight" of worldly business and anxious carefulness that would hinder your activity and readiness; and "give thyself wholly" to that work which

thy Lord hath appointed thee. Thou art his, not thine own. What hast thou that thou hast not received at his hands? What moment of time, or point of space, hast thou of thine own right? And as it is *in* and *by* Christ, so it is for him, and under responsibility to him, you live. All thou hast is his. Children, relations, friends, houses and lands, endowments of body and of mind, the good gifts of nature, of industry, and of grace itself, are not thine in absolute, independent possession, but thine *in trust;* lent to thee for present use, and put into thy care as talents for which thou must render an account. Everywhere and at all times thou art Christ's. At the side of the cradle, in the kitchen and in the parlor, in the workshop or in the counting-house, at the desk, at the receipt of custom, in buying and selling, in thy going out and thy coming in, in thy downlying and thy uprising, thou art Christ's. Whatsoever therefore thou doest, whether thou eatest or drinkest, do it as unto the Lord, as in his sight, and so as to secure his approbation. This world is no longer your portion or inheritance. Your interest in it is but a life interest, and will soon be past.

"Life is short, and strength is fleeting;
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still on muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

Live then while you live. You have your field before you, your opportunities around you, your talents within you, the good seed provided for you, the dew and the rain promised you, and the command, "Go into the vineyard and be not slothful," printed in bright and burning letters on every page of life and of life's book. Around you are the young to be trained, and the old to be entreated as a father; the outcasts to be gathered in; those who are within your reach to be taken by the hand and led until they see Jesus; the wounded to be bound up; the widow and the orphan to be visited; comfort to be ministered to them that are in affliction; the stranger to be received into your hospitality; and he who, far from home, is unprotected by a father's counsels and uncomforted by a mother's tenderness, to be led by you *in* the paths of righteousness and *from* the ways that lead to death.

What a field has Christ given you, lying at your very door, and in the pathway of your

daily duties! Yes; both the day and the field of your labor are in this life, and in this world. Your Master has gone for a season. This work he has entrusted to you. But he will return again, and every man will then find favor and reward, according as his work shall be.

"Rouse to this work of high and holy love,
And thou an angel's happiness shalt know,
Shalt bless the earth while in the world above;
The good begun by thee shall onward flow
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;
The seed that, in these few and fleeting hours,
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,
And yield thee fruits divine in heaven's immortal bowers."

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERIL OF A FRUITLESS LIFE.

It is for Christ, and not for himself that every true Christian is living and laboring. If it is otherwise, he "is dead while he lives." He labors for that which is not bread, and spends his strength for that which does not profit. Oh, thou foolish and blinded professor, who art living for thine own ease, for thine own emolument, and for the *present* comfort only of thy family, "who hath bewitched you?" All you need and all you have a right to—all that you can well use and enjoy, here upon earth, is only what is requisite for present wants; all the rest belongs to Christ, whose servant you are, and whose work you perform. What profit then shall you have from all your hoarding and your toil?

Suppose you *are* a Christian, and that you are resting your hope upon the sure foundation laid in Zion; nevertheless, by the course you are pursuing, instead of treasuring up gold and silver and precious stones which shall enrich

you eternally, you are only heaping up wood, hay, and stubble that shall perish. How surely then must you suffer a grievous, an eternal, and an irreparable loss. You may be saved; but it will be "so as by fire." You may be *scarcely* saved, and "the world abused, your hopes undone, your labor lost," your reaping may be the whirlwind. You may be plucked as a brand from the burning, but you shall be one of "the least in the kingdom of heaven." You shall enter it a poor, lean, and hunger-bitten soul. For while "to him that hath shall be given, so that he shall have more abundantly, from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; while he that soweth plentifully, shall reap a hundred-fold. While other righteous souls shall shine as stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of glory, you shall appear glimmering, faint, and dim, and far away among the countless host shall hide your diminished head. While other redeemed ones walk majestically, with glittering diadems upon their heads, you shall sadly mingle in that throng with a starless crown.

"If grief in heaven might find a place,
And shame the worshipper bow down
Who meets the Saviour face to face,
'T would be to wear a starless crown—

"To find, in all that countless host
Who meet before the eternal throne,
Who once, like us, were sinners lost,
Not one to say you led him home.

"The Son, to do his Father's will,
Could lay his own bright crown aside;
The law's stern mandate to fulfil,
Poured out his blood for us, and died.

"Shall we who know his wondrous love,
While here below, sit idly down?
Ah, no; for then in heaven above
We too must wear a starless crown.

"O may it ne'er of me be said,
No soul, that 's saved by grace divine,
Has called for blessings on my head,
Or linked its destiny with mine."

For whom then, fruitless professor, is it that with such infatuation thou art now sowing to the flesh, and endeavoring to gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles? For heirs you know not whom—for heirs who will probably never thank you, and to whom with no blessing, but a curse instead, your riches may entail

pride, vanity, idleness, prodigality, profligacy, drunkenness, and death.

At the very best, worldly professor, such only can be your possible reward for all your worldliness, and over-busy covetous devotion to the pursuit of gain. But if this is your all of life, if this is the end and aim of your professed love and devotion to Christ, then let me tell you that your life is a robbery of God, and a defrauding of your own soul.

The man who truly lives so as to fulfil the purpose of life, and secure its great, glorious, and ultimate "end everlasting life," is like a vine quietly "planted by the waters, which is fruitful and full of branches, by reason of many waters. It has strong rods as sceptres with which to bear rule, and overcome all evil. Its stature is exalted among the thick branches, and its height with the multitude of its branches."

But he whose life is perverted to selfish ends, to pride and vanity and show, though he may even spread himself in a green and flourishing profession, shall be like that tree as described by the same inspired penman when "it is plucked up in fury, and cast down to the ground, when the east wind has dried up its

fruit. Its strong rods are broken and withered: the fire consumed them. And now it is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And a fire is gone out which hath devoured its fruit, so that it hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

"Fruit unto holiness," is the only way to "the end, everlasting life." A tree of the Lord—a tree of righteousness, planted by the divine Husbandman in the soil of his own divine nature, and by the river of life—is only distinguishable from all mere useless and cumbering trees by bringing forth fruit to the glory of God. In this earthly vineyard both grow together until the harvest, but no longer. Then God's purposes are all fulfilled. The wheat has matured, the fruit has ripened. The seasons of growth, produce, and maturity have all passed. And now the axe which has been lying at the root of the trees, in sight of all, ready for the use of the gardener, and oftentimes uplifted and partially employed in the measures of his wise discipline, is raised for its final purpose, and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit—fruit meet for repentance—is "hewn

down, and cast into the fire." The voice of forbearance and mercy is no longer heard. The interposing cry, "Spare it yet another year," is silenced. The season of probation is past. God's long suffering is ended. The cumberer, who only availed himself of life and of God's manifold mercies to live at ease and leave to others the work and toil and fruit-bearing, is cut down, and cast, with all *unprofitable*, as well as all *rotten, noxious, and dangerous* branches, into the fire.

"Let me not languish, then, and spend
A life as barren to Thy praise,
As is the dust to which that life doth tend,
Only with brief delays.

"Thou that hast given so much to me,
Give one thing more, a grateful heart;
And let a humble beggar work on thee
By prayerful winning art.

"I 'd make thy gifts occasion more;
O Lord, if I in this be crossed,
All thou hast given me heretofore,
Is worse by far than lost.

"Therefore I cry, and cry again,
And in no quiet let thee be,
Till I a thankful heart obtain,
O Lord, my God, from thee.

"Not thankful when thou pleasest me,
Nor when I walk in pleasure's ways;
But such a heart whose pulse may be,
To live and sing thy praise."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LIVING CHRISTIAN STIMULATED.

To be a Christian is a glorious privilege, and a divine honor. It is "a high calling, a royal priesthood." It is to be "a Son of God," "a joint-heir with Christ," and "a partaker of the divine nature." It is to be filled with heaven-borrowed thoughts of joys to come, and to walk the earth with inward glory crowned.

> "Earth's fairest scenes the Christian calls his own;
> He is a monarch, and his throne
> Is built amid the skies."

But to be a Christian is to be more than a professor of religion and a member of the church. That which makes any man a Christian is union to Christ, and conformity to him. The sum of religion, as even a heathen could express it, is to be like God whom thou worshipest. This then is Christianity, to believe in Christ as "God manifest in flesh," to come to Christ, to be united to Christ, to be in all things subject to Christ, to live *in* Christ, to live *for* Christ, and in all things, in all ways,

and in all events to follow Christ. It is to become partakers in the benefits of Christ's obedience, sufferings, and death, that we may have fellowship with him also in his life and glory. It is to be crucified together with Christ, dead with Christ, buried with Christ, and risen with Christ. Oh, see to it that thy heart is sincerely Christ's. As this piety alone will meet acceptance at the inevitable day of heart-revealing, heart-approving, or heart-condemning, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." Be very sure that your heart closes with Christ, and is fixed upon him, and living by faith on him.

Are you indeed a Christian? Then you have seen the plague of your own heart, felt the direful corruption of sin, and are most anxious for deliverance from it. You know how it defiles, like leprosy, our houses, the very walls and floors, our meat and our drink, and every thing we touch. Polluting when alone, and polluting in society, it leads to misery and death, burdens the whole creation, and "presses groans out of the very frame of the earth itself." You cannot but desire to have your soul purified from this foul and loathsome dis-

ease, that, elevated above all the mists and impurities of inordinate worldly affections, the light of divine grace may shine unobstructed into your heart and be reflected with power upon the observing hearts of those around you. Let it be thus seen that you are not a mere hearer of the word, but a doer of it; a partaker of Christ; one who feels his guilt and the greatness of that love which led Christ to die for him; one who has been washed and made clean in the fountain opened in Christ's blood for sin and uncleanness; one who constantly draws living waters from the wells of salvation, and one whose whole conduct savors of his secret and habitual converse with Christ in the recesses of his own heart.

Christ became like us, for the very purpose that we might thus become like him. Christ took upon him our nature that he might, by the mighty working of his Holy Spirit, make us alive unto God, new creatures, a peculiar people, zealous of good works, finding our meat and our drink in doing his will.

Yes, Christian, you are set for the rising or fall of those around you. You are an epistle of Christ, read either to the conviction and

conversion, or to the condemnation of many. Your life is your testimony for or against Christ. By it you proclaim the truth or falsity of your own profession, and as far as your influence extends, even of the religion you profess.

Why is it that Christians, knowing as they do that the only pure peace and joy found in this world is realized in the service of Christ, do not continually abide in his presence and follow in his steps? Is it not because this requires spiritual exertion, watchfulness, and faith; and that, in our present carnal state, these are most uncongenial? We are spiritually indolent and inert. We are ever ready to take our ease in Zion—to fold our arms, and to go asleep upon the lap of that carnal Delilah who at once weans us from God, steals from us our strength, and robs us of our happiness.

Oh, lay to heart the wickedness, the ingratitude, and the folly of this besetting worldliness, and give all diligence to resist and to overcome it. You profess to be a Christian. You wish to be, you hope you are a real Christian; and you desire to be so more truly and perfectly. Be sincere then. Be true. Do not belie your

profession. Do not contradict and contravene and effectually destroy your blessed hope. Let your ways, your life, your conduct, your conversation, and your daily course all attest your sincerity. Let Christ dwell in your heart. Let Christ rule over you. Let Christ live in you, and the life that you live, live by the faith of the Son of God. Then will Christ strengthen your weak faith, and weaken your strong corruptions; be in you the hope of glory, and the glory of your hopes; enliven grace and deaden sin; rejoice your heart with anticipations of the glory of God, and sink in its estimation all sublunary good; help you cheerily along the way, and bring you at last to Zion with everlasting joy.

In the meantime be sure that in blessing others you will receive a tenfold blessing in your own soul; that in giving you will be receiving; in laboring, loving; in following Jesus, immeasurably happier than in the house of feasting or the hall of merchandise; and that in making mothers and sisters and brethren of the poor and needy, of the widow and the fatherless, Christ will be to you a mother, brother, sister, and friend, and graciously recompense

you with an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"Friend, thou must trust in Him who trod before
The desolate paths of life;
Must bear in meekness, as he meekly bore,
Sorrow and toil and strife.
Think how the Son of God
These thorny paths hath trod;
Think how he longed to go,
Yet tarried out for thee the appointed woe;
Think of his loneliness in places dim,
When no man comforted nor cared for him;
Think how he prayed, unaided and alone,
In that dread agony, 'Thy will be done!'
Friend, do not thou despair,
Christ, in his heaven of heavens, will hear thy prayer."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHRISTIAN A LIVING CHRISTIAN TO THE END.

CHRISTIAN, you are the Lord's, and so is all you have and are. Holiness to the Lord is written upon them. They are sacred. Regard them as such. Willingly, constantly, conscientiously so consider, and so use them. "Brother," said a Christian to another, who was speaking of the sacrifice involved in the maintenance and propagation of religion, "you are a merchant. Now suppose you employ a clerk to sell goods, and a schoolmaster to teach your children, and you order your clerk to pay the schoolmaster out of the store such an amount for his services in teaching. Suppose further, that your clerk complains that *he* had to pay this schoolmaster his salary, and should speak of the sacrifice he was making to do it; what would you say to this?" "Why," said the merchant, "I should say it was preposterous." "Well," said the brother, "God employs you to sell goods as his clerk, and your minister

he employs to teach His children, and he requires you to pay that minister's salary, and to meet all other claims upon the love and bounty of your divine Master out of the income of that store. Now do you call this your liberality, and say that you are making great sacrifices? No; you are just as much bound to sell goods for God and for his cause as the minister and the missionary are to preach for him; and if you think otherwise, you thereby prove that you are not the Lord's, but that you still claim to be your own. You live unto yourself. You act as if you were independent of God. You are living without God in the world, and this is practical atheism."

That this is the case is undeniable because you withhold from God your heart by withholding that on which your heart is placed. What God chiefly values is heart-love, heart-services, and heart-sacrifices; and to give him your profession of such devotion, and yet keep from him what requires any real sacrifice, is as if a man should alienate from you the heart of your child, so that he no longer renders to you an affectionate and universal, but only an outward and constrained obedience. You cannot

have true faith and knowledge of Christ, and of your infinite indebtedness to him, without living to him in a willing and cheerful consecration. Saving knowledge of Christ is both enlightening and enlivening. It is divine power. It kindles affection and impels to action. Christian love is not blind, but founded upon the real worth and beauty and benignity of its object. Christian obedience is the fruit and offspring, the outgoing of Christian love, and therefore is not constrained, but spontaneous and necessary. Thus it is that the Christian life acts, and increases by acting, "proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

The Christian finds that in keeping God's commandments there is great reward; and that in doing God's will and living for him there is pleasantness and peace. God's vineyard which he is required to cultivate, is covered with beds of flowers and spices, so that the more the Christian walks and works in it, the more does their fragrance refresh and delight him. No duty is hard, because the greater the effort required the greater is the strength imparted, the love awakened, and the peace of conscience

shed abroad in remunerative joy. These, like sweet breathings of the Spirit, fill and expand his sails, and float the true and loving heart along the ocean of life, and over all its trials, to the haven of everlasting rest. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

"In thy weakness shall be strength,
In thy weariness repose.

"If thou dost remember still
Thy Redeemer and his worth,
Doing all his gracious will,
Walking by the light of truth;

"Fear not thou to lose the way,
When the evening gloom hath come;
God, whom thou didst serve all day,
Bids his angels guide thee home."

Where there is love there will be also life and readiness to work. "Then said I, Here am I; send me. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The redeemed soul becomes a ready messenger, an angel, a servant, a co-worker. The flame of gratitude and love, kindled by the live coal of a Saviour's mercy, quickens every nerve and muscle of body, soul, and spirit, to a free offer and consecration. This love overcomes all difficulties within and with-

out, quenches the fire of opposing lusts, and itself becomes a fire so ardent as to consume all obstacles. "His word is in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, I cannot stay."

Learn to entertain these thoughts even in the midst of your daily business and your earthly employments. Seek, O seek! seek earnestly more and more of this wisdom from above which cometh down from the Father of lights. Call in your heart from its too frequent wanderings. Commune often with yourself and God, and be still. Be more within and alone, and with things above. Set the Lord always before you; then shall he be at your right hand, that you will not be moved. The oftener you are thus with God the more you will love him and become like him. You will delight to live for God. You will find God in every thing and every thing in God, God everywhere and everywhere God.

"Thee will I love, my strength and tower,
Thee will I love, my joy and crown;
Thee will I love with all my power,
In all my works, and thee alone;
Thee will I love, till that pure fire
Fill my whole soul with chaste desire.

"In darkness willingly I strayed,
I sought thee, yet from thee I roved;
For wide my wandering thoughts were spread,
Thy creatures more than thee I loved:
And now, if more at length I see,
'T is through thy light, and comes from thee.

"I thank thee, uncreated Sun,
That thy bright beams on me have shined:
I thank thee, who hast overthrown
My foes, and healed my wounded mind:
I thank thee, whose enlivening voice
Bids my freed heart in thee rejoice.

"Give to my eyes refreshing tears,
Give to my heart chaste, hallowed fires;
Give to my soul, with filial fears,
The love that all heaven's host inspires;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

"Thee will I love, my joy, my crown!
Thee will I love, my Lord, my God!
Thee will I love, though all may frown,
And thorns and briars perplex my road;
Yea, when my heart and flesh decay,
Thee shall I love in endless day."

Finally, I would observe on this point, that as this work of the Christian is one of love, and involves the willing devotion of every thing to Christ, so it is a life-work. You are sent into

the vineyard to work the work of a day, be it longer or shorter.

A tradesman once told the celebrated John Newton, rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, that he was about to retire from business, as he had gained enough for himself and family. "Why then," said Mr. Newton, "now be the Lord's journeyman, and carry on business for him." This he ought to have done from the beginning. Life to him was, as to its highest end, not commenced. He had to begin at the beginning when the end of all things was, to him, near at hand. He had laid up treasure for himself, but was not rich towards God. In God's estimation he was still poor, and in the reckoning of eternity his treasure was only wrath against the day of wrath. He was an unprofitable, barren tree. Happy for him that God had in time revealed to him the insufficiency of wealth and the danger of growing richer. Few slaves of self and family and the world ever make enough, or work long enough. "I once thought," said a wealthy business man, "that if I ever got ten thousand dollars I should be content, but a man's wants increase with his property." That man is still

accumulating. He has not enough yet. He is not ready to "carry on business for the Lord." The world is a hard master. It gives no respite, no vacation, and no rest. Its cry is that of the grave, Give, give; work, work, work. Pay-day never comes. Rest and repose it knows not. Its only wages are work, woe, and death.

The Christian is a worker, and his is a life-work—"while the day lasts." But his work pays as it goes. As he works he sings, and singing works. Dr. Hawes, in his biography of Normand Smith, a merchant in his congregation, says he never grew in grace more rapidly, or shone brighter as a Christian, than during the last six or seven years of his life, when he had the greatest amount of business on his hands. From the time when he devoted all to God, and resolved to pursue his business as a part of his religion, he found no tendency in his worldly engagements to chill his piety or enchain his affections to earth. His business became to him a means of grace, and helped him forward in the divine life just as truly as reading the Scriptures and prayer.

"Each succeeding stage
We pass of this life's sacred pilgrimage,
Hath its own task assigned, its duty given;
Each hour, in grief or joy, in youth or age,
Should, like the lake, bear impress of the heaven,
Whether the blush of morn, or the calm star of even."

Christian, you may not tire and faint, nor grow weary, nor sit down, nor take your ease in Zion. A short time before the death of the celebrated Whitefield, the Rev. William Tennent paid him a visit, when they dined together with several other ministers at a gentleman's house. After dinner Mr. Whitefield adverted to the difficulties attending the Christian ministry, lamented that all their zeal availed but little; said that he was weary with the burden of the day; that his great consolation was, that in a short time his work would be done, and that then he should depart and be with Christ. He then asked the ministers present if it was not their great comfort that they should soon go to rest. They generally assented except Mr. Tennent, who sat next to Mr. Whitefield in silence, and by his countenance discovered but little pleasure in the conversation. Mr. Whitefield, tapping him on the knee, said, "Well, brother Tennent, you are the oldest

man among us; do you not rejoice to think that the time is so near at hand when you will be called home?" Mr. Tennent bluntly answered, "I have no wish about it." Mr. Whitefield pressed him again. Mr. Tennent again answered, "No, sir; it is no pleasure to me at all; and if you knew your duty, it would be none to you. I have nothing to do with death; my business is to live as long as I can, as well as I can, and to serve my Master as faithfully as I can, until he shall think proper to call me home." Mr. Whitefield still urged for an explicit answer to his question, in case the time of death were left to his own choice. Mr. Tennent replied, "I have no choice about it; I am God's servant, and have engaged to do his business as long as he pleases to continue me therein. But now, brother, let me ask you a question: What do you think I should say, if I were to send my man into the field to plough, and if at noon I should go to the field and find him lounging under a tree, and complaining, 'Master, the sun is very hot, and the ploughing hard; I am weary of the work you have appointed me, and am overdone with the heat and burden of the day.

Do, master, let me return home, and be discharged from this hard service.' What should I say? Why, that he was a lazy fellow, and that it was his business to do the work that I had appointed him, until I should think fit to call him home."

"Lord, in thy field I work all day;
I read, I teach, I warn, I pray;
And yet these wilful, wandering sheep
Within thy fold I cannot keep.

"I journey, yet no step is won—
Alas, the weary course I run!
Like sailors shipwrecked in their dreams,
All powerless and benighted seems.

"What, wearied out with half a life?
Scared with this smooth, unbloody strife?
Think where thy coward hopes had flown,
Had heaven held out the martyr's crown.

"How wouldst thou hang upon the cross,
To whom a weary hour is loss?
Or how the thorns and scourging brook,
Who shrinkest from a scornful look?"

This is the most satisfying evidence you can present to yourself and others, to prove that you are in sincerity and truth a child of God, a genuine Christian—one who will be acknowledged as such when Christ, who is our Judge,

shall sit upon his awful throne, and render unto every man according to his real character and deeds. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give the bright and morning star."

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
And hosts of sins are pressing hard,
To draw thee from the skies.

"O watch, and fight, and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

"Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thy arduous work will not be done,
Till thou hast got the crown.

"Fight on, my soul, till death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He 'll take thee at thy parting breath
Up to his blest abode."

CHAPTER X.

THE LIVING CHRISTIAN OBEYS AS FULLY AS HE BELIEVES.

THERE are many things without which a man cannot be Christ's, which nevertheless will not make one truly his, either here or hereafter. To be a Christian, a man must have a right knowledge and belief of Christian doctrine. This is implied in calling Christ Lord, and in believing on him. To do so, is to admit what Christ himself has so frequently taught, that Christ is the only possible way of salvation, and that there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved; that Christ is one with the Father, his only begotten Son, having all power in heaven and on earth, having life in himself, and giving life to whomsoever he pleaseth; that Christ is to be honored even as the Father; and that Christ is what the term LORD—as used by the Greek version—imports, JEHOVAH, "God manifest in the flesh."

Do you then, my dear friend, believe this? Do you, with Peter, believe that Jesus is the

Christ, "the Son of the living God?" If you do this with all your heart, blessed art thou; "for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto you, but your Father who is in heaven." For "no man calleth Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

If you thus believe in your heart, and confess with your life, it is well with you. But this is not all that is necessary. It is not enough to believe aright so far as mere words and doctrine can delineate the truth as it is in Jesus; for the devils also believe, and yet tremble through a fearful looking for of judgment. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven." It is necessary that, in addition to right believing, there should be a conformity to Christ and to the ordinances of his church, or in other words, right doing. This also a man will manifest as surely as he truly believes in Christ's doctrines and in Christ personally. That man cannot be a true believer in Christ, who does not keep his statutes and ordinances—who does not come out from the world, and deny himself, and take up the cross and follow Christ. Whoever does not do this, cannot be Christ's disci-

ple. He proves that he is ashamed of Christ, and of him Christ forewarns us that he will be ashamed before his Father and his holy angels. Such a man's faith is dead. It is not living, operative, energetic. It is the faith of the head only, and not of the heart also. It is not the faith of a man, but only of a part of a man, and that the least active, powerful, and controlling. It terminates in the word, and overlooks the work and the end of the gospel. It takes hold of the letter, but fails to imbibe the spirit. It is founded on the reason and will of man, and not on the authority and testimony of God. It is the form of godliness without its power; the name, without the nature; the body, without the soul. It is the letter which killeth, and is devoid of the Spirit which alone giveth life. It is destitute of love, the principle of all free, voluntary, and happy obedience, and is therefore dead.

Our Lord assures us, that though right doctrines are essential to salvation, something else is needed or these doctrines cannot be savingly efficacious, and that is, a life spent in loving, cheerful obedience to him, with a heartfelt desire to please him in all our ways. A servant of Christ is one who obeys Christ as

his Master, and makes Christ's revealed word the rule of his conduct. No man can have evidence that he is a servant of Christ any further or longer than this obedience is rendered. And no one, as Dr. Payson remarks, can have evidence that he obeys the will of Christ in one particular, unless he sincerely and strenuously aims to obey him in every particular, and we may add, according to the analogy or proportion of duty; for the will of Christ is one.

A skeleton, though perfect, is not a man, nor can it act the part of a man. To be a man, it is necessary that God's Spirit should breathe upon the dry bones and cause them to live. It is necessary that they should be clothed with flesh, and animated with the principle of life. In like manner, the stones that go to make up a building are not of themselves the house. To construct a building, it is necessary that the separate stones should be built upon a foundation, should rest upon it, and that every stone should be fitly framed and adapted to its place. And thus it is, that when Christ's Spirit breathes upon the dry bones—of a dead orthodoxy, it may be—and causes them to live, then, and not till then, do living

Christians arise to praise the Lord. And so also when Christ, the divine architect, takes the hard, lifeless, and shapeless stones from the quarry of depraved humanity, and makes them living stones instinct with divine life, then, and then only do they become a habitation of God, a temple for the Lord.

"What mortal lives, not foul with sinful stains?
What breast that has not felt remorse's pains?
And can this hopeless thing, pollute, debased,
Its own disfigured nature e'er reform?
Say, can the sculptured marble, once defaced,
Restore its lineaments, renew its form?
That can the sculptor's hand alone perform;
Else must the marred and mutilated stone
For ever lie imperfect and deform:
So man may sin and wail, but not atone;
Since to restore the soul belongs to God alone."

Christ also, let it be remembered, is the foundation on which these stones and the whole building rest; and as he himself is the chief corner-stone, so all that rest upon him as their foundation are by the life-giving influences of his Spirit quickened, and made alive unto God. To be a real Christian, therefore, is to be a living, loving, growing Christian—a consecrated temple, devoted to the service not of self, but

of God. To be a real Christian, is to realize the fact of a life in and by Christ; to find the spring and principle of every thing he does in the relationship by which he is connected and made one with the Saviour. And the graces of faith, hope, love, and zeal develop and mature in any heart only when they are rooted and grounded in Christ, and grow up and strengthen through life derived from him. Such is the order of the divine economy in the production of Christian life. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature. All things are become new. To him to live is Christ. To him Christ is the model of life and character, the standard of duty, and the guide to action.

"And is this life prolonged to me?
Are days and seasons given?
Shall I not then prepare to be
A fitter heir for heaven?

"Cleansed be my soul from every sin,
Through my Redeemer's blood:
And let my flesh and heart begin
The honors of my Lord.

"Let me no more my soul defile
With sin's deceitful toys;
Let cheerful hope, increasing still,
Approach to heavenly joys.

"O may my thankful lips proclaim
The wonders of thy praise,
And spread the savor of thy name
Where'er I spend my days.

"On earth let my example shine;
And when I leave this state,
May heaven receive this soul of mine
To bliss divinely great."

CHAPTER XI.

THE LIVING CHRISTIAN GUIDED BY THE LAW OF ORDER.

God is a God of order. He is its origin and first exemplar. "Order is heaven's first law," and the principle of all law. It pervades the universe. Harmony is the music of the spheres, and the melody of all peaceful and well-governed communities on earth.

The life of the body depends on the harmonious adjustment and operation of various organs. Order is also the life of the family, the community, and the state. Law and obedience, and that obedience rendered in the time, place, and circumstances of its requirement, are the foundation and cement of all society. As surely as the over or irregular action of one organ of the body begets disease or death, so it is in the body politic. And as the irregular and unmeasured sounding of any one string or instrument produces discord, so it is in the play of human wills in the great concert of society. Society is a chain of obligations, and its links,

well ordered and brightened, must support each other.

Just so is it with the soul, and with God's greatest society, the church. As divine law proceeds from the harmony of the divine attributes, and is based upon the order and propriety of duty, it follows that, both as a matter of acceptable service, and as a means of personal edification and delight, obedience must be rendered in accordance with that order. God being himself a God of order, every thing that is must be established with certain relations, consequences, and if capable of them, rights and obligations. These are founded in nature, and are necessary and inflexible. We are therefore required to observe this order, and to act in accordance with these relations, subject to inevitable retribution.

The world is a map inscribed with lines of demarcation, diversified everywhere with discriminative colors, which indicate opportunity, adaptation, want, fulfilment, duty. In one place the poor are to be aided; in another, the ignorant are to be instructed; in another, the sick are to be consoled and watched over. In one place is the sphere of endurance; in another, is

the arena of action; in another, is the platform of authority, eloquence, and power. The question with every man ought to be, What is my present allotted sphere and task? Resigning his own will, he should lay himself upon the altar of duty, at whatever sacrifice; being not what he chooses to be, but what God wills him to be, and doing not what he chooses to do, but what God wills he should do. Life is thus an unknown and dangerous journey through a waste, howling wilderness, where Providence points out the course to be pursued, that is, the present duty.

We are not to imagine that duty is less duty when indicated by God's providence, than when delineated by God's word. God's law is his will; but so also is his providence. To act out of harmony with the one, is as truly disobedience as to transgress the other; and conformity to the one is necessary in order to conformity to the other. This order of divine providence affects also our position, circumstances, and sphere of duty, as much as the duty itself. We are where and what God has chosen for us. Duty therefore requires us to accept God's arrangements, to acquiesce in them, to act in har-

mony with them, and not to fall behind or to go beyond them, until, in the use of proper means, God opens or shuts the door. To act otherwise, to run ahead or forestall providence, is to imitate the prodigal, and involve ourselves in all the consequences of our self-will.

"There is a providence that shapes our ends,
Roughhew them as we may."

"Whether we will or no, each cherished thought
Is passing into marble, line by line,
And as we speak, our very words are wrought
Into expression in a form divine,
Or chains of evil on the soul entwine."

"A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." And hence, as it has been beautifully said, the only true home which a man can have, is the enclosure of God's providence.

We are to conform to the order of the divine will by not doing that which it is not now proper for us to do, as much as by doing now that which is proper and required; by not desiring and seeking for ourselves greater things or loftier duties than God at present makes proper; and by suffering affliction, denying our

selves, renouncing the world, and taking up and bearing our cross.

> "Where duty lies,
> There's the highest sacrifice.
> Oft in lowliest tasks of earth
> Faith doth show her genuine birth,
> Giving them immortal worth,
> And with incense fills the urn
> Which before the throne doth burn.
> All around God's temple is;
> Here, whate'er is done, is his:
> Therefore all things 'neath the skies
> Are replete with auguries."

In fact, so important is this principle of ORDER IN DUTY, that duty ceases to be duty, and becomes disobedience, when not rendered in the order in which it is required.

This is illustrated in every relation of life. The value to others, the benefit to themselves, and the evidence of an obedient spirit and intelligent worth, in a child, in a servant, in a clerk, in an agent, in any one to whom a duty is assigned, depends on their prompt and cheerful compliance with prescribed duty in the way and order in which it is enjoined. Self-will destroys obedience. An eye-servant is distrusted or discarded. One that mingles self-interest

with his partial and reserved compliance with duty, is regarded as dishonest. Want of affectionate willingness stamps obedience as sullen stubbornness. And the self-opinionated man who substitutes his own plans and order of procedure for those which are prescribed, is not only disobedient, but will in all probability defeat the very end in view, and lead to failure instead of success.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUPREME DUTY IS TO CHRIST.

As the ultimate end and object of all authority, obedience, and love, Christ—his word and will—must be supreme. This is the first and great commandment. To deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ, is the very essence of Christian character and life. Even father and mother, brother and sister, husband and wife, self-interest and life itself are to be "hated," that is, disregarded, set aside, and their claims held in abeyance, when Christ calls for our devotion. This habitual, unhesitating recognition of Christ as the supreme object of love and obedience, is the atmosphere in which as a Christian you are to live and move and have your being; the centre and circumference of all duty; the vital spring of all its movements. And hence, living in this spirit, and animated by this principle, you will comply with all other claims of duty created by all other relations, in the order in which they

are presented by Christ and as they affect his glory.

> "The primal duties shine aloft like stars:
> The charities that soothe and heal and bless,
> Are scattered at the feet of man like flowers."

A branch, in order to fructify, must be one with the stock, and the stock one with the root, from which, nourishment being derived, passes first into the stock, and then into the branch, and there forms the bud, then the flower, and afterwards the fruit. In like manner, as a Christian, you must be a living branch of Christ the vine, rooted and grounded in him, deriving life and nourishment from him, and branching out in the ways and measures he directs, so as to bring forth "fruit in its season." As Christians, we no longer live our natural life; we have been cut off from the old wild olive-tree of human nature, and grafted into the good olive-tree, and incorporated with it. Our Christian nature and life are not ours, but Christ's; for except we abide in him, we die. We live and grow and bear fruit only by his life-giving power and grace. We must therefore be directed by his will and word and Spirit.

Every relation of man to God requires that

his religion should have a supreme regard to God as its motive, an humble reliance on divine guidance for its method, a grateful and earnest desire to please God and to honor him above all creatures as its end and aim. If a man is moved to what he calls religion merely by a regard for himself, or for any created object; if he follows only the suggestions of his own mind; if he assumes authority in his own person, or submits to the authority of any other person in reference to the terms or the modes of his religious service; if his aim is no higher than to gratify himself or to please his fellowmen, it is surely a perilous confounding of things essentially different to call this religion.

Such then is the position in which as a Christian you stand towards yourself, your family, the church, and the world. Upon all these you look out as the Lord's, and as the sphere of your obligations; and your inquiry is, "How may I discharge my duty to these so as best to fulfil my obligations to them, and at the same time most please and honor Christ, and advance his glorious cause?" It is only as it is rendered in this spirit that obedience becomes acceptable and profitable, and ceases to be insincere,

hypocritical, and self-righteous disobedience. The young ruler in the gospels kept all the commandments, as he thought. But he reversed their order, and his heart not being right with God, its rottenness was communicated to all his doings, and contaminated them with self-righteousness and idolatry. In the same way the Pharisees gave tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, which they ought to have done; but this occupied their time and thoughts to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; and therefore this partial and disproportionate obedience became an abomination in the sight of God, and an aggravation of their guilt.

Hence, while many important demands are presented to your consideration and require your diligent endeavors, there is an *order* in which they should be attended to. Not all at once; not some to be entirely neglected, while others receive all your attention; not the least important first, nor the most important last; but each in its own order. Duty is the incorruptible seed of divine truth, which being cherished and quickened by divine grace thrusts its roots from a centre outwards, and does not bear its full flowers and fruit until it has ele-

vated its stock and spread its branches in all directions to the very utmost of its ability and opportunity.

Duty is that circle of which God is the circumference; in whose centre man stands guided by conscience, and the divine will, word, and providence; and which widens evermore in its converging lines, until it enfolds all beings and touches the throne of Jehovah.

> "Thus does the soul its circling duty take,
> As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
> The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
> Another still, and still another spreads.
> Friend, kindred, neighbor, first it will embrace,
> His country next, and next all human race."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY TO HIMSELF.

As bound by the order of duty, the faithful Christian, next to his supreme obligations to Christ, will regard the welfare of *his own soul.* That soul, remember, is not yours, but you; and you are the Lord's. If you are indeed a Christian, your soul has been created anew in Christ Jesus, and must ever be a living sacrifice to him, and a living temple in which that sacrifice is daily offered up. This is true godliness. This is God's first work of grace, and man's first exemplification of that grace in the world around him. Godliness being the life of God in the soul of man, is wrought in it according to the order of his grace, in the mould of his gospel, and after the likeness of his dear Son—the perfect embodiment of transcendent beauty, unrivalled excellence, and faultless perfection. Godliness is a miracle of grace; but it is also a miracle of order. It is the work of almighty power, infinite wisdom, and boundless goodness, in bringing or-

der out of confusion, form out of chaos, light out of darkness, harmony out of discord, peace out of war, love out of hatred, and life out of death—in accomplishing all this in a soul free to choose, having a will to determine, a power to act, and a conscience to approve or condemn; in a world alienated from God, enslaved by sin, led captive by Satan at his will—and while the sinner is bound down by a thousand passions, desires, and habits, to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life.

This salvation God works out in *the soul*, in accordance also with its laws and constitution. Life from God does not violate, but conforms to and sustains the order and arrangement of man's various powers—restoring, sanctifying, and ennobling them by working in them to will and choose and do according to his good pleasure; by changing them into his own image; and by making them partakers of the divine nature.

As the Christian is the highest style of man as a rational and immortal being, so is piety the most rational and becoming service in which that being can be employed. It regenerates

and rejoices the heart. It is perfect freedom. It is satisfying. It is pleasantness and peace. It draws man into communion and fellowship with the greatest and best of beings, in whose presence is fulness of joy. It unites him in holy love to heaven. He mingles his notes of praise with the songs of the redeemed, feels a portion of their transports, joins in the exalted employments of the angels of God, and receives a foretaste of the bliss of paradise. It unites man's heart. It restores him to himself. It assuages the tumult of passion, and hushes into silence the never-ceasing roar of the surging billows of lust and inordinate affections. It gives him victory over himself, the most exalted of all triumphs. He is at peace. He is at rest. His heart has found the true centre of attraction, and there reposes in unspeakable delight. There the soul sits and dwells enthroned, protected by almighty power, guided by infinite wisdom, and enjoying in endless profusion the blessings dispensed by unbounded goodness. O how jealous then, dear reader, should you be, lest you come short of this high calling, this glory of man, this greatest work of God.

There is a way of holiness as well as a way

of providence; a way of salvation as well as of preservation. And it is from contravening the divine order, that we see so many spiritual monsters, deformed, paralyzed, one-sided, useless, imperfect, hypocritical, and apostate professors. They began wrong:

> "Like an inverted cone,
> They want the proper base to stand upon."

By a neglect of the order and proportion of duty as adapted to the order and proportion of their natural character, temper, disposition, and surrounding circumstances, even sincere Christians are in many respects partial and defective. By some sinful imprudence or glaring defect, they render their character vulnerable, their sincerity doubtful, and their example useless. They resemble a well-proportioned body which is disfigured by some natural deformity, or some accidental injury. They are full grown men in some features of their character, while only children or dwarfs in others. They are like double-painted signs. In one view they are Christian, while the ugly features of the old sinful self are seen obtruding through the superficial painting.

"In consequence," says Payson, "of their nat-

ural constitution, of the circumstances in which they are placed, or of the absence of temptation, most Christians find it comparatively easy to avoid some sins, to be exemplary in the performance of some duties, and to cultivate some branches of the Christian temper with success. One man, for instance, enjoys much leisure, and has a taste for study; hence the acquisition of religious knowledge becomes easy to him. Another is blessed with a mild and amiable disposition, and of course can regulate his temper without much difficulty. A third is constitutionally liberal, and can therefore contribute readily to religious and charitable objects. A fourth is quiet and retiring, and is for this reason little tempted to pride, ambition, or discontent. A fifth is naturally bold and ardent; of course he can easily overcome indolence and the fear of man. In a word, there are very few Christians who, for these and other similar reasons, do not in some respects excel. But the evil is, that they are prone, though perhaps without being sensible of it, to attach an undue importance to that grace or duty in which they excel, to make the whole of religion consist in it, and to neglect other things of equal im-

portance which they would find more difficult. Nay more, they secretly regard the eminence which they have attained in some respects, as an excuse for great deficiencies in others; and endeavor to atone for a neglect of self-denying duties, by attending with peculiar zeal to those duties which are more easy.

"One man, for instance, is lukewarm in his affections, formal in his devotions, and makes little progress in subduing his sinful propensities. But he comforts himself with the hope that his knowledge of religious truth is increasing. Another who neglects to improve opportunities for acquiring religious knowledge, derives consolation from the warmth of his zeal, and the liveliness of his affections. One person is by no means disposed to contribute liberally for the promotion of Christ's cause and the relief of the poor, but he hopes to atone for his deficiency in this respect by the frequency and fervency of his prayers. Another neglects prayer, meditation, and communion with God, but he quiets himself by pleading the pressure of worldly business, and by liberal contributions for religious and charitable purposes. Thus, as there are few Christians who do not

excel in some respects, there are few who are not in some respects exceedingly deficient. Small indeed is the number of those who sedulously strive to stand perfect and complete in *all* the will of God."

But, further, order and completeness in personal duty are essential not only to the character of the work done, or left undone, but to the spiritual happiness and growth of the doer. They are as necessary to inward peace as to the cultivation of a spirit of power and of wisdom and of a sound mind.

We have thus placed your duty to yourself as the primary obligation which you owe to created beings, because all other duties must be regulated by it. It is the rule and standard, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*." As a creature of God, a free moral and accountable being, as having a body and a soul, as intrusted with time, talents, and opportunities, and as under obligation to love God and to seek his kingdom supremely, you must see to it that you love yourself—not your body; not your appetites, passions, and lusts; not covetousness, nor worldliness, nor ambition, nor pride, nor pomp, nor power; not the world, nor riches,

nor houses, nor lands; not any thing sublunary, any thing seen and temporal. No; but your SELF, your SOUL—that which makes you a man, and not a clod of earth, a statue, a beast, or bird, or tree; that which allies you to angels, to heaven, to immortality, and to God; that which makes you also liable to hell, to the fellowship of devils, and to everlasting destruction. Love this SELF, this SOUL, this person, this dying and yet undying being that you are. Love yourself as you ought, as God requires, as your salvation demands, as the infinite grace and goodness of Christ your Saviour make possible. Let this love of Christ to you, and of you towards Christ, fill your soul, animate and regulate your love to all other beings, and lead you to live for, and to love them as beings mutually related with yourself to God in Christ.

"May I resolve with all my heart,
With all my powers to serve the Lord;
Nor from his precepts e'er depart,
Whose service is a rich reward.

"O be his service all my joy!
Around let my example shine,
Till others love the blest employ,
And join in labors so divine.

"Be this the purpose of my soul,
My solemn, my determined choice,
To yield to his supreme control,
And in his kind commands rejoice.

"O may I never faint nor tire,
Nor wandering leave his sacred ways:
Blest Lord, accept my soul's desire,
And give me strength to live thy praise."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE FAMILY.

NEXT to yourself in the order of duty and of responsibility to Christ, is your family. This also you will regard as Christ's, and as a field intrusted by him to your special cultivation and control. The family is the foundation of society and of the church; God's nursery and primary school for the training and discipline of those who are to become active members of both; and the source of all the springs which water and enrich the world, and make glad the city of our God. If a father, you are a priest, a king, a guide, a ruler, the bond of union, the source of wisdom, the centre of attraction, and the standard of right and wrong. In you your children should see a representative of God; and by your life, influence, example, and instruction their characters are moulded for eternal issues. Look upon them as such, and as such train them in the way they should go, and bring them up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Imbue them so thoroughly with

a conviction of their own sinfulness, life's vanity, the world's danger, death's certainty and of heaven or hell as its hereafter, that they may early "seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and leave all other things to be added according to God's infinite wisdom and goodness.

Of one thing you may be sure: you cannot save your children, but you may destroy them. You cannot make them Christians, but you can throw insuperable obstacles in the way of their becoming such. Would you then have your child a Christian, you must be one, and live one. It will not be enough to talk and profess and seem to be a Christian; you must be a Christian. You must think, and feel, and love, and live a Christian. Children will be what you are, not what you seem. They will feel, if they cannot discern, your real character. They will do as you in heart do, not as you say and pray and preach. If you are worldly, covetous, money-making, money-hoarding, penurious, inactive, then by irresistible instinct they will be moulded by your character. It will be daguerreotyped by invisible secret processes upon their hearts. Your will, your heart will im-

press themselves upon theirs. If you would guide them to heaven, and meet them there, you must not only point but lead the way, and make your family a little heaven below, of which Christian love is the centre and the circumference. Well says Tupper:

"Alas for a thousand fathers, whose indulgent sloth
Hath emptied the vial of confusion o'er a thousand homes;
Alas for the palaces and hovels, that might have been
nurseries for heaven,
But which worldliness has blighted into schools of hell.
A kindness most unkind, that hath always spared the
rod;
A weak and numbing indecision in the mind that should
be master;
A foolish love, pregnant of hate, that never frowned on
sin;
A moral cowardice of heart, that never dares command.
The house where the master ruleth is strong in united
subjection,
And the only commandment with promise, being hon-
ored, is a blessing to that house;
But if he yieldeth up the reins, it is weak in discordant
anarchy,
And the bonds of love and union melt away as ropes of
sand."

Whatever be your position in the family, you occupy the centre of influences which, to all human view, will widen to eternity, and will

determine the weal or woe, not only of yourself and those around you, but of countless numbers beyond your reach.

"I have a vivid recollection," says the Rev. Richard Knill, "of the effect of maternal influence. My honored mother was a religious woman, and she watched over and instructed me as pious mothers are accustomed to do. Alas, I often forgot her admonitions; but in my thoughtless days I never lost the impressions which her holy example had made on my mind. After spending a large portion of my life in foreign lands, I returned again to visit my native village. Both my parents died while I was in Russia, and their house is now occupied by my brother. The furniture remains just the same as when I was a boy; and at night I was accommodated with the same bed in which I had often slept before; but my busy thoughts would not let me sleep. I was thinking how God had led me through the journey of life. At last the light of the morning darted through the little window, and then my eye caught a sight of the spot where my sainted mother, forty years before, took me by the hand and said, 'Come, my dear, kneel down with me, and I will go to

prayer.' This completely overcame me. I seemed to hear the very tones of her voice; I recollected some of her expressions; and I burst into tears, and arose from my bed, and fell upon my knees just on the spot where my mother kneeled, and thanked God that I once had a praying mother. And Oh, if every parent could feel what I felt then, I am sure they would pray with their children, as well as pray for them."

What thought more rapturous than that of a family united in one of the many mansions in our Father's house! What picture so celestial in all its parts as the first gathering of such a family in the heavenly home. The aged parents, well stricken in years, with hoary head and tottering steps, are there buoyant with the energy of immortal youth. The daughters, who grew up like beautiful flowers, to bloom and shed their fragrance in this desert air and then wither and die, are there fresh, blooming, and fragrant in spiritual beauty. The sons, after various struggles and vicissitudes in the dangerous paths of life, have at length made their way to the only home where their hearts have ever found satisfying rest. The little children

also, early called and early saved; the precious jewels in Christ's treasury; the cherub visitants who smiled upon us and then closed their eyes in soft slumbers, and after awakening in our bosom new affections to bind us to them in inseparable, ineffable union, flew up to heaven and fastened them as chains to the throne of God; those sweet birds of paradise which alighted on our hearthstone, and warbled such notes of soul-stirring melody, and then expanding their bright wings, soared singing, until lost in the glory of the skies; those perished buds, whose perfume still breathes odorous memories around our dwelling—they too are there. The last wanderer has returned, and after many a storm and shipwreck and perilous adventure, is safe anchored in the haven of peace. All fear and anxiety are at an end. Prayer has given place to praise, doubt to delight, and suspense to certainty. The voyage is ended, the sea of life is passed. Probationary discipline is accomplished. The body of sin has been transformed into a spiritual body. The allurements of the world have vanished. The temptations and assaults of the powers of darkness have ceased. The dangers of apos-

tasy and ruin are all over. Disease there is none. Sickness is unknown. Death is a thing unknown and unfeared. Farewell is a word for which there is no corresponding idea. The family is now complete; their happiness is perfect; their communion is unbroken, uninterrupted, heart with heart, and soul with soul. No chord is discordant, harsh, or out of tune. All is harmony and peace and love, and their joy is everlasting.

Christian, are you living for such a picture, and will you and yours constitute the elements of such a heavenly home? May God grant it. May he so enable you to live as members of the family here, that as a family you may thus live and love hereafter.

But, on the other hand, may not some lost child, lifting up his eyes in torments, lament because of you in bitter anguish and in words inconceivably more terrible than those of the poet:

> "Weep, sire, with shame and ruing;
> Weep for thy child's undoing;
> For the days when I was young,
> And no prayer was taught my tongue;
> Nor the record from on high,
> Of the life that cannot die.

Wiles of the world and men,
Of their threescore years and ten,
Earthly profit, human praise,
Thou didst set before my gaze
As the guiding stars of life,
As the meed of toil and strife:
I ran the world's race well,
And find my portion—HELL!

"Weep, mother, weep, yet know
'T will not shorten endless woe,
Nor thy prayer unbind my chain,
Thy repentance soften pain,
Nor the lifeblood of thy frame
For one moment quench this flame.
Weep not beside my tomb,
That is gentle, painless gloom;
Let the worm and darkness prey
On my senseless slumbering clay:
Weep for the priceless gem
That may not hide with them;
Weep the lost spirit's fate,
Yet know thy tears too late:
Had they sooner fallen—well,
I had not wept in HELL!"

Christian parent, beware, beware! for what shall all the world profit you and your children, if through your neglect their souls are lost?

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE CHURCH.

In the order of duty, next to the family comes the church. This is that spiritual household of which you are now a member. This church is your home. Here you were born of water and of the Spirit. At her breasts of consolation you have received as a babe in Christ the sincere milk of the word, and stronger meat when you were able to bear it. Here you were incorporated with the company of the redeemed as a disciple, an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. Here you were taught all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. Here you have been cherished with many tears and prayers. In her courts you were planted, and nourished with the dew of ordinances and the tender care of the spiritual Husbandman. Here you drank of the river of the water of life, and became spiritually minded, so as to enjoy the beauty of holiness, and sit before God under the droppings of the sanctuary, as in heavenly

places in Christ Jesus, with great delight. Here you took the cup of salvation into your hands, and paid your vows unto God in the presence of the congregation. And here you have gone in and out, as in green pastures and beside quiet waters, while your soul has been satisfied as with a feast of good things, and you have felt that it was none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven.

Of the members of the church, it is joyfully true that they are your family. Every one of them is your brother or sister in the Lord. This is that brotherhood which you are required to love; and not till that love of the brethren has sprung up and become active in your heart, are your skirts clear of injury to Christ's body, which he loved so as to give himself for it, and which he expects you to love and cherish even as your own soul. Your brethren in Christ you will love and serve for the truth's sake that dwelleth in them. Loving supremely Him that begat, you will also love those who are begotten of him, and who bear his image. And as their heavenly Father heareth them always, your kindness to them will be repaid by their prayers and God's answering blessing.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

"I love thy church, O God;
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

"If e'er to bless thy sons
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

"If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

"For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHRISTIAN IN HIS BUSINESS.

NEXT in order is the sphere of your worldly employment. Labor of some kind is necessary. If a man will not labor, neither shall he eat in quietness and joy. This is a part of the curse of sin and of man's present probationary state. As such you will regard it. You will accept it as a part of the cross and as your allotted duty here below, and see in it the divine wisdom and goodness. Seek the presence and blessing of God to give you an humble, cheerful, willing spirit, to hallow your daily work with his smile, to ennoble it with his approbation, and to enrich it with his gracious furtherance and success.

"There is nothing on earth so lowly but duty giveth it importance;
No station so degrading but it is ennobled by obedience.
Yea, to break stones upon the highway, acknowledging the Lord in thy lot,
Happy shalt thou be and honorable, more than many children of the mighty."

Regard your occupation as your Christian field. Ask guidance in selecting your profession. Consecrate it to Christ. Implore his daily and constant presence in it. Live in it for him. Labor as in his sight. Be eminent in it for diligence, and for whatsoever things are honorable and of good report. This is well pleasing to Christ. Keep your business in subjection to him. Regard its interests as subordinate to those of your soul, your family, and the church. And that it may not become a snare to you, give of your substance regularly and systematically, according as God has prospered you, to every good work. Be ever found willing to communicate and ready to distribute, not by constraint, but willingly; forward to devise and to execute liberal things for the church and the world.

In order to live to Christ, every engagement and business must be chosen and undertaken with regard to your obligation to him. You must not assume a weight of cares beyond the measure of your capacity and strength. You are not to take upon yourself other burdens than are put upon you by necessity or duty, nor to put yourself in the way of them.

Covetousness, ambition, pride, self-confidence, glorying in your wisdom, skill, and capacity for business, or an improper condescension to the wishes of others, may lead you to do this. You may thus overwhelm yourself and be submerged under the weight and multitude of self-imposed engagements, to which the Lord has not called you. Beset with care, worried with constant anxiety, you may become depressed in spirit, uneasy in conscience, cold and languid in duty, joyless in heart. You cannot look up with freedom and confidence; a chain of self-upbraiding fear drags you down. You cannot be spiritually minded, which is life and peace; you must become carnally minded, which is death.

As there is an order of duty, so is there an order as regards the time to be devoted to it. To every duty there is a time and a season; a time proportioned to its importance as related to your soul, to God, to your family, to the church, and the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. You are therefore to "redeem the time," to buy it back at any price from the enslaving, grasping power of a sinful, selfish, and ambitious world.

The common idea that business—that is, mere-

ly one kind of business, and that the least intellectual, moral, or spiritual—*must* be attended to, and swallow up the time required for the duty we owe to ourselves, to our families, and to the church, is nothing less than atheistic, profane, God-defying, and suicidal. It inverts the pyramid of duty. It makes mammon master, and its authority and will the rule of duty. And as this "business" is very much what every man chooses to make it, the common maxim in reality makes man's will the rule of duty and God's will subordinate to man's caprice. It is a violation of the constitution of nature, of your own nature, and also of that of the family and the church. It is not of the Father. It is of the devil, and is one of those destructive lies which he originates.

But in order to live to Christ in your daily calling, you must not only limit and wisely apportion your duties to your time and strength, you must also regulate your feelings towards your earthly pursuits. You may not perhaps assume too many worldly cares or too much business, you may even be a drone and an idler in the world, and yet have your heart and your affections set too much upon the beggarly ele-

ments and occupations of earth. A man may drown in a little brook as well as in a great river, and a man may be ungodly, unspiritual, and worldly, even when his interest in business is small. You may not, you must not be idle. You must work, and be "diligent" in business. But you must so learn Christ and seek power from on high as at the same time to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord"—as to be wisely worldly, but not worldly wise; as, in short, to live to Christ, and yet live in the busy world. You must assume no cares and duties but those you can refer to Christ, on which you can ask his blessing, in which you can enjoy his presence, and by which you may best serve and glorify him. Zeal for his cause, desire for his glory, and making this the supreme end and aim in all your undertakings, this is living to Christ.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD.

NEXT in order is the great field the world, which lies beyond and outside of the church and the family; and to labor in this as it becomes you, you are best prepared by securing first the interests of your own soul, of your family, and the church. Remember this. Believe and lay it to heart. It is the Christian who truly recognizes the paramount claims of Christ, and who lives in loving obedience to him in his own heart, that will also think and feel and pray and labor and give most for the city, the state, the country, and the world.

The true Christian looks around upon his fellow-citizens, his fellow-countrymen, his fellow-men everywhere, and beholds in them also Christ's field; and the life and power and love and zeal developed in the cultivation of piety within his own soul, in the family, and in the church, will make him "a burning and a shining light" in all the relations of life. While, like Christ, he loves with a peculiar love his

own brethren according to the Spirit, he will also love all men because all are his brethren according to the flesh, subjected to the dominion of Christ, included in His commission and message of salvation, out of whom Christ is to gather together in one a multitude of souls, and kindness to whom is accounted as rendered unto Christ.

Christianity provides abundantly, by example, precept, motive, and command, for all the duties of friendship and good neighborhood; for all honor, honesty, and integrity in social life; for all generous liberality, enterprise, and devotion to the public good; for all patriotic services and sacrifices for our country's honor and prosperity. It stimulates also to the furtherance of all commercial, mechanical, geographical, and other instrumentalities by which the earth's whole extent may be discovered, colonized, and made fruitful; by which all its resources for the maintenance and comfort of mankind may be developed; by which all countries may be brought into close neighborhood; by which a perfect intercommunity of thought and feeling may be cultivated; by which all selfish and sectional views may give place to

a universal brotherhood of good-will; and by which the unity of the human race, as of one blood, of one common ancestry, and bound to one common judgment, shall be demonstrated in its actual manifestation.

But while this is all true, so that no man can be a good Christian and not a good citizen, a good merchant, a good patriot, a good soldier, voyager, or discoverer, as the case may be, nevertheless these are not the primary and direct results at which Christianity aims. The relief of temporal wants and the advancement of social and universal well-being, are indeed required by every feeling of humanity and Christian obligation; but it is a false and shallow and material philosophy that would make these the *primary* object and end of true philanthropy. In almost every case physical evils are the result of moral and spiritual ignorance, error, and death; and just as in the case of a fruitless and impoverished tree, the first requisite is, not rain, sunshine, and dew, but the removal of what is noxious to its growth and the reinvigoration of life in the root, so is it in the human tree. It must first be grafted into the living Vine. It must receive a new

and quickening life, before it can grow and flourish; in whatsoever state it is, learn therein to be content, and to find therein materials for the support of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. It is *good* therefore to relieve man's present distress, and *better* to remove present ignorance; but it is *best* of all to impart spiritual life, and to win souls to Christ.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN'S PHILANTHROPY DIVINE.

Christianity is as divinely original in its philanthropy, as it is in its theology. Both are superhuman; above and beyond man's thoughts and ways, as are the heavens above the earth. Christianity has both a telescopic and a microscopic power. It brings near things distant, and it reveals things hidden. It gives substance to things hoped for, and evidence to things unseen. Its arithmetic is based upon the reckoning of eternal years. Its analysis goes down to the first elements of our mysterious nature. It knows all that is in man. It understands the whole machinery of his moral and accountable nature. It can work in man to will, to choose, and to act. It can turn his heart even as the rivers of water are turned, and transform it even as the chrysalis becomes, from a creeping worm, a sportive insect. It can redeem, regenerate, and disenthrall the captive, dead, and enslaved spirit. It can implant new affections, new desires, new habits,

new principles, new motives, and new actions. It is eyes to the blind soul, ears to the deaf, speech to the dumb, feet to the lame, strength to the feeble, riches to the poor, joy to the sorrowful, contentment and gratitude to the thankless, and life to the dead. It works from within outward, and from the foundation upward. It first purifies the fountain, and thus swells the streams. It restores man to God, in order to restore him to himself, to his family, and to society. It instructs him in the alphabet of heaven, and makes him wise in all the wisdom of the skies. It enables him to see the littleness of things called great on earth, and the greatness of things here called little. It discloses the "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" reserved for all that truly seek it; and the dust and dross, the hay, wood, and stubble of earth, that are to be burned up. It unveils the splendor of the inheritance beyond the grave, and the unspeakable joys which are at God's right hand, and shows that in comparison with them, all the sickness, sorrow, and poverty of earth are not worthy to be regarded. It teaches man the necessity of all these earthly vicissitudes and tribulations, and

even of offences, hypocrisies, and villanies, that by these probationary tests the silver and the gold may be refined, and the dross separated; that the tares and wheat may alike grow and mature until the harvest, when the tares shall be burned and the wheat be garnered.

True Christian philanthropy is therefore as superhuman and divine as Christian theology. It is a system of faith, and not of sight. It is spiritual, and not carnal. It is the wisdom of God, though foolishness with man. All other philanthropy is foolishness with God. It puts the effect for the cause, and by working on the effect, vainly thinks to remove the cause. It begins at the end instead of the beginning, with the streams instead of the springs, with the branches instead of the root, with the outside instead of the inside, with the actions instead of the character, with the habits instead of the principles, with the head instead of the heart. It tries to repair what is destroyed, to mend what is utterly shattered, to revive what is dead, to stop the ocean by a wall of sand, to fill the bottomless gulf of man's craving wants with a handful of bread and a cup of water; to turn back the course of eternal providence;

assume the sceptre of infinite wisdom; transform earth into heaven, misery into mercy, trial into enjoyment, discipline into amusement, probation into indolent enjoyment, and man the rebel, the guilty, sinful, and polluted, even as such and while such, into the happy participant of all heaven's bounty.

Thus have men, thinking themselves wise, ever made themselves fools, and by changing the truth of God into a lie astonished the world and themselves ultimately, by the fatuity of all their schemes, and the lying vanity of all their wisdom.

Christians therefore live and walk *by faith* as much in their doing as in their believing—as much in their philanthropy as in their theology.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHRISTIAN, HOW ARE YOU LIVING?

Do you then realize who and what Christ is? Do you in all things submit yourself to him? Are you living not for yourself, but for him? Are you endeavoring in all things to know his will, and to do it? Are you personally, relatively, in your business, and in the world, living as becometh the gospel of Christ, suitably to your high calling as a son and heir of God? Is every thing done from a desire to please Christ, to secure his favor, and to be to him a useful and a worthy follower? This is the rule by which you should now judge yourself, that you be not hereafter condemned with the world. This will convince you of sin and unbelief and unfaithful stewardship, and stimulate you not to doubt and despair, but to duty and devotion. Apply this rule faithfully. And knowing that your heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, ask God to search you, and try you, and to discover to you every evil way that is in you, and to lead

you in the way everlasting. Judge yourself by this rule, as in God's sight, who searcheth your heart and knoweth you altogether. Do this in view of a coming judgment. How all important is it to be assured that your foundation is the Rock.

You may be a professor, consistent in conduct, regular in attendance on the means of grace, and liberal in the use of what God has given you; and yet, after all, your hope may be founded in yourself, and not in Christ. Your building may seem fair and goodly; and yet when the sea bursts upon it, and the winds blow against it, it may fall.

You may perhaps profess to be a Christian, and yet not a zealous, devoted, and spiritually-minded Christian. You may think that, as you do not profess to adopt a rule so strict and holy—a rule which disregards so entirely the ordinary judgment of the world, which condemns your own opinions, wishes, and interests, and makes Christ and his will the supreme law of life and the measure of all duty—therefore you are not bound by it, and will not be judged by it. But this is a most blind and fatal error, as unreasonable as it is too often immovable.

Such professors are what the apostle terms them in Eph. 5 : 6, "children of" unpersuadableness, unbelief, "disobedience." They will not be persuaded that they are wrong. They will neither be convinced nor reformed. Religion with them is a polite, fashionable, and gentlemanly deference towards God, and not a supreme love to him. It tenders God the "mint, anise, and cummin" of a Sabbath worship, while it retains pride, is swallowed up in business, politics, pleasure, and self-indulgence. It permits its followers to reject every cross and self-denial, and to follow the bent of their own inclinations. Self is their god. This world is their chief good. Money, wealth, and influence, are the chief end of their life; and their own opinion is their rule of action. They are above the "weakness" and "prejudices" of ministers, and all over-righteous, too-religious people. They have no time nor taste for any religious reading or services that would break in upon their delusive peace. And such things as union to Christ, fellowship with God, communion with the Holy Ghost, are beyond their experience or comprehension.

Verily such men will be awakened from their

hallucination. They shall awake, but it may be too late. Going down to the grave with a lie upon their lips and in their life, their hope will perish before the impartial judgment of Him who is no respecter of persons. If any man who names the name of Christ "have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." He will not only not be saved, but he will be damned with a deeper damnation.

"The restless merchant, he that loves to steep
His brain in wealth, and lays his soul to sleep
On bags of bullion, sees the immortal crown,
And fain would mount, but ingots keep him down."

But you may not so openly renounce Christianity as to substitute a formal, fashionable Sabbath worship for that denial of self, taking up the cross, following Christ, and living not unto yourself, but unto him, which is its very essence. You may recognize and admit this to be the standard of true living, that is, of the only real, satisfying, and sanctifying piety; and yet yourself live contrary to it. Your heart is not right. Your eye is not single. Your life, measured by this rule, is crooked and perverse. There is no harmony between your words and your works, your prayers and your

practice, your language and your life, your pew and your counting-house, your secret and your public ways, your Sabbath and your week, your getting and your giving. The coin that glitters like gold in the twilight of man's imperfect vision, is found, in the sunlight of God's omniscient eye, to be a counterfeit. The grain that shoots up and grows and waves so gracefully in the wind of prosperity, when sifted by the unfailing scrutiny of God's heart-searching judgment may prove to be tares. There is no order, no proportion in your piety. There is no conformity to Christ in spirit, principles, and habits. Every thing is reversed and upside down. Self is first, and not last. The world is in your heart, instead of being under your feet. Money is your master, and not your slave. Charity is a burden, and giving is not to you more blessed than receiving. You are of the earth, earthy. Your whole life is a lie, the greatest and most dangerous of lies—a lie which brands your inmost heart—a lie involving innumerable particular lies, so that every step, every word, every action of every day, is a denial of Christ and a crucifying of him afresh—a lie in which if you die, you must sink

into everlasting burnings, since there shall in no wise enter into heaven any thing that defileth or maketh a lie.

Oh that you would now make your calling and election sure. Oh, how much of this searching and sifting judgment is now needed in the church.

"Lord, when we leave the world and come to thee,
How dull, how slow are we!
Our thoughts are millstones, and our souls are lead,
And our desires are dead;
Our vows are fairly promised, faintly paid,
Or broken, or not made:
Our better work, if any good, attends
Upon our private ends;
In whose performance one poor worldly scoff
Foils us or beats us off.
If thy sharp scourge find out some secret fault,
We grumble or revolt;
And if thy gentle hand forbear, we stray,
Or idly lose the way.
Is the road fair, we loiter; clogged with mire,
We stick, or else retire:
A lamb appears a lion, and we fear
Each bush we see 's a bear.
When our dull souls direct our thoughts to thee,
As slow as snails are we.
"But at the earth we dart our winged desire;
We burn. we burn like fire.
Like as the amorous needle joys to bend

To her magnetic friend;
Or as the greedy lover's eyeballs fly
At his fair mistress' eye;
So, so we cling to earth; we fly and puff,
Yet fly not fast enough.
If pleasure beckon with her balmy hand,
Her beck 's a strong command;
If honor calls us with his courtly breath,
An hour's delay is death;
If profit's golden-fingered charm inveigles,
We clip more swift than eagles;
Let Auster weep, or blustering Boreas roar
Till eyes or lungs be sore;
Let Neptune swell until his dropsy sides
Burst into broken tides;
Nor threatening rocks, nor winds, nor waves, nor fire,
Can curb our fierce desire;
Nor fire, nor rocks, can stop our furious minds,
Nor waves, nor winds:
How fast and fearless do our footsteps flee;
The light-foot roebuck 's not so swift as we."

O that Christ would come in and reign and rule, dear reader, in your heart. O that he would make it as the chariots of Aminadab, swift to run in the way of his commandments—wholly and solely his. True Christians are the lights of the world, shining in transparent honor and sincerity, and bearing about them the credentials of their high and holy calling. And what are these? Not the blossoms of a

fair profession, but the ripe and yellow fruit of godlike actions. Cornelius' prayers and alms came up as a memorial before God; not his prayers alone, nor his alms alone, but his prayers *and* his alms. Beautiful conjunction. Piety towards God, and an active charity towards all mankind, are the twin personifications of vital, saving piety. Herein, says Christ, am I glorified, when ye bear much fruit: when you are found diligently and cheerfully keeping my commandments and doing my will. Yes; while denying yourself, bearing your cross, and following Christ, not with eye-service, not grudgingly, not thinking how little you can give and do and yet secure his favor, but rather, how much you can give and do for Him to whom you owe your hope, your life, your heaven, your all; when you glory in his cross, considering his yoke easy, and his burden light; when you count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of him; when you can sow your seed even in tears; when you can be joyful in sorrow, and sing praises even in death; then, O then does Christ look down benignantly upon you in the manifestations of his love. Your tears he will keep bottled up

in the vials of his remembrance, until you reap in gladness, and come forth with singing and with everlasting joy upon your head. And then, for every desire and wish and effort to please and serve him, you shall receive, in addition to the hundred-fold promised you in this world, life everlasting.

"Life is the hallowed sphere
Of sacred duties to our fellow-men,
The precious and appointed season, when
Sweet deeds of love the mourner's heart may cheer;
The hour of patient and unwearied toil,
When seed of heaven is sown in earth's dark soil.

"Ours is this work below:
Our lips may breathe the message of the cross,
Which soothes the sinner's anguish and remorse,
Irradiates with joy the grief-worn brow,
Flings hope's bright sunshine on the pilgrim's road,
And plants in man's cold heart sweet trust in God.

"How glorious is life
Thus consecrated, and how poor appears,
Beside the Christian's struggles, toils, and tears,
The earthly warrior's sacrifice and strife:
Beautiful are the efforts faith employs
To fill this world with heaven's immortal joys."

CHAPTER XX.

DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS WORK.

SEEING, therefore, that such and so great issues of life and death depend upon your being a workman for Christ that "needeth not to be ashamed," let me entreat you to awake to the true object of your continuance in this world. It is, that among the dead you may be living, among the selfish holy, and among the worldly spiritual, laboring with your might until you finish the work Christ has given you to do.

What a dignity and glory does this give to life, and what an importance does it attach to every opportunity of doing good to yourself, to your family, to the church, and to the world. You live as Christ's. The world in which you toil belongs to Christ by creation, providence, covenant, and redemption. You labor under the authority and appointment of Christ. You are encouraged by the presence and power of Christ. His eye is upon you. He looks down from heaven and takes account of every one

of his servants, in every part of his vineyard: well pleased if he find them watchful and faithful, but grieved and wounded if he perceives that they are only eye-servants, loitering and spending their time in idle and unprofitable self-indulgence.

It is in this light we are enabled to comprehend the transcendent dignity and worth of Christian life and duty in their bearing upon eternal interests. Faith in Christ is the only glass in which a man can see in himself any thing to awaken high and holy aspirations, read in his soul "the majestic character of God," and feel the earnest of its heritage of glory. Yes; for evil or for good, life is the criterion of a man; and its memories of duty done or undone will pervade all the firmament of his being and all the duration of his existence.

How glorious then is the true Christian in his relation to Him whom his new Master now he calls. A man is dignified and honored by the dignity and honor of him in whose service he is employed, or by the character of the nation which he represents, and whose public officer he is. In this respect, how does all earthly glory fade into obscurity when brought into the

light of the glorious majesty of the Christian's Lord and Master. But he is not merely our Master. He is our Friend, our Elder Brother, our Husband, and our living Head. He calls us no longer, and he treats us no longer as servants. We are his "brethren," his mother and sisters, his own, his chosen, his beloved.

Be not satisfied to be any less than such a Christian, and to possess such a faith, such a hope, and such a present fruition of its sanctifying power. Spurn from you the base-born spirit that is willing to be "a very fragment of a man," that "for a minute of joy will reap an age of sorrow." Be not satisfied to live and labor in the spirit of fear and bondage. Be not contented until the spirit of adoption is shed abroad in your heart. If indeed a Christian, you are a child. God in Christ is your reconciled and loving Father. You are at home in God. God is your dwelling-place; and Oh, how blessed are they that dwell in God as their home. They cannot but be still praising Him whose fatherly goodness and divine mercy they continually experience. Oh that you may indeed *dwell* there. Let not your "own God," your "exceeding joy," be to you only as an inn

or a tent, to which you turn aside as a wayfaring man for a night. Let God be your home, your rest, where your affections find their centre and their full delight. Live not as a servant, or as a stranger, or as an alien, but as a friend, as a son or daughter of the Lord God Almighty. Let your soul cry out to him, saying, Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Oh, be not thou far from me. Sup with me, and make my heart thy lasting home.

"Lord, what unvalued pleasures crowned
The days of old;
When thou wert so familiar found,
Those days were gold:

"When Abram wished, thou couldst afford
With him to feast;
When Lot but said, 'Turn in, my Lord,'
Thou wert his guest.

"But ah, this heart of mine doth pant
And beat for thee;
Yet thou art strange, and wilt not grant
Thyself to me.

"What! shall thy people be so dear
To thee no more?
Or is not heaven to earth as near
As heretofore?

"The famished raven's hoarser cry
Finds out thine ear;
My soul is famished, and I die
Unless thou hear.

"O thou great Alpha, King of kings,
O bow to me,
Or lend my soul seraphic wings
To get to thee."

Such views will kindle and fan the flame of love, and make duty a delight and labor pleasure. What service is hard to the child who loves his parent, or the wife who lives to please her husband, or to the husband who loves his wife even as himself? And when the love of Christ constraineth any soul, how does it count all loss gain, and all sacrifice delight, and how does it esteem riches and honor but as dross, as nothing and less than nothing, for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, by whom he is crucified unto the world and the world unto him!

Of all the works possible for human agency, it has been well and forcibly said, none seems to compare, in point of real dignity, with that of converting sinners to Christ. Thus to affect the relation in which an immortal soul

stands to its Maker, seems a work of hardly less dignity than its original creation. What an infinite good is in this way accomplished. A spirit created to bear the image of God, but having become an enemy of that Holy One; formed to assist in the works of God, but sold to the service of Satan; made to share the blessedness of the heavenly state, but now sinking in the miseries of endless perdition; naturally so good and so great, but now so terribly fallen—such a creature is restored to its original brightness, and more than its original blessedness. In the light of eternity, the change thus effected stands out as incomparably more illustrious than the best that conquerors or statesmen can achieve. That it may appear less to the common vision of men, is a proof that darkness, and not light, is the medium of their fancied seeing—that falsehood, and not truth, is the character of their boasted intelligence.

Critics in literature and art commend to the skies those who give us new exhibitions of mental vigor or skill, who transfer to the canvas the beauties of creation, or develop their likenesses in marble. Of what praise, then, would he be thought worthy who could produce a form of

more excellence than these, endue it with intelligence, make it the image of God, and give it being for eternity. It is not in human power by itself to effect this; but every disciple of Christ can employ the means by which it is really done, and that as a common event in the dispensation of divine mercy. Why, then, do so few ever undertake this greatest of human achievements? There are enough who are willing to labor in the transformation of wildernesses into fertile fields; enough who rejoice in subduing the elements of nature to the use of man; many who strive with all their power to mould the opinions and shape the temporal destinies of men; not a few that would gladly look upon states and institutions of their own forming: why so few to take part in deeds of brighter glory and more lasting worth than all these? Have the many bearing the Christian name no actual love for souls? They cannot then be the children of God; they cannot be true members of the body of Christ. Or do they not esteem it possible that men can do any thing toward the turning of sinners from the error of their ways? This would argue great ignorance of the history of redemption in the

world, such ignorance as we should hardly suppose compatible with a heaven-taught mind. What then is the cause?

The cause is, and can be no other than the want of love to Christ, want of love to the souls of men, want of faith and obedience to our Lord, and want of assurance that he can and will make us wise to win souls to him, to save them from death, and to shine with him as stars in the firmament of heaven. It is the want of that spirit which led Bunyan to write, as he lay in Bedford jail in the prospect of an ignominious death, and which when at liberty he both felt and acted: "Wherefore," says Bunyan, "I prayed to God that he would comfort me, and give me strength to do and suffer what he should call me to; yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid. I was also at this time so really possessed with the thought of death, that oft I was as if I was on the ladder with a rope about my neck; only this was some encouragement to me: I thought I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words unto a multitude, which I thought would come to see me die; and thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert *one* soul by my

last words, I shall not count my life thrown away nor lost."

Such is the glory of the Christian, both in his Master and in his work, in his motive, in his aim, and in his end.

"Who would not be a Christian? I have seen
Men shrinking from the term, as if it brought
A charge against them. Yet the honored name
Is full of gentlest meaning. Odors rise,
And beauty floats around it; from its eyes
Great tears of heavenly sympathy descend;
And mercy, soft as Hermon's fragrant dew,
Springs in its heart, and from its lips distils.

"I 've seen it press an infant to its breast,
And kiss away his troubles; seen it take
An old gray-headed man, oppressed with years,
And wrinkled o'er with sorrow, and disclose
A prospect to his vision which hath made
The old man sing with gladness; seen it lay
Its soft hand gently on the blind and lame,
And lead them safely home; and seen it stoop
To the vile outcasts of society,
Whose character was odious in the streets,
And bring them back to virtue and to God.

"Hark! 't is the loftiest name the language bears,
And all the languages in all the worlds
Have none sublimer. It relates to Christ,
And breathes of God and holiness; suggests
The virtues of humanity, adorned

By the rich graces of the Holy Ghost,
To fit them for the paradise on high,
Where angels dwell, and perfect manhood shines
In the clear lustre of redeeming love,
For ever and for ever; and implies
A SON AND HEIR OF THE ETERNAL GOD!"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CHRISTIAN CONSTRAINED BY THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

THE only motive to this life and work which I will press upon you is the love of Christ. This I do, not in my own name, nor by any authority of man. I urge it not merely for your own sake, though it is the only true source of all your present hope and joy, your confidence and usefulness; and though your loving or not loving Christ will pronounce you blessed or cursed for ever. I urge this motive not merely for the sake of the church, though its prosperity and advancement are so deeply involved. Nor do I now, under the influence of this motive, press upon you the claims of a world lying in wickedness and mad in its rebellion.

Neither would I lay upon you any burden which you are expected to carry alone, or for any denominational glorying. But passing over all other considerations, I would most solemnly, as in God's presence and in the light of a coming eternity, invoke every one who reads these

pages, whether young or old, rich or poor, bond or free, to consecrate the life that remains to you in this world, *to that work to which Christ has called you, for Christ's sake.*

Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel. Love to Christ is the sum and substance of Christian piety. This is the all-controlling law to the Christian heart, its life, its light, its joy. Love to Christ opens the door of the heart, welcomes all doctrines, accepts all mysteries, receives all precepts, embraces all promises, and submits to all duties. Love to Christ brings heaven down to earth, and lifts up earth to heaven; tinges with celestial brightness every moment and movement of life, and ennobles them by involving them with the interests of eternity. Christ is heaven, and his love the atmosphere and bliss of heaven. It brightens every eye, warbles on every tongue, breathes in every thought, sounds from every lyre, and echoes back from every company throughout the wide extent of the celestial mansions. It is the theme of every song, the subject of every rehearsal, the interest of every personal history, and the point of every pilgrim's story. All heaven is harmony and peace and joy and

self-sacrificing devotion, because all heaven is love.

And so it is in the church below. This church originated in the bosom of Christ's infinite love. It was purchased by his precious, redeeming blood. This love, shed abroad in their hearts, gathered into the church its first martyrs. It transformed their minds and their lives. It made loss gain, poverty riches, suffering solace, sacrifice delight, self-denial pleasure, the cross glory, liberality thanksgiving, life duty, and the world Christ's lost but rightful empire. It made the pelting stones, the whip, the cords, the dungeon, the fiery furnace, the lacerating saw, the lion's teeth, the viper's fang, the living death of shame, exposure, and slow-consuming torture—death in any and in every form—gain, recompense, and rest for Christ's sake.

Dear reader, art thou in health? Dost thou live? Art thou blest with a useful and satisfying employment? Hast thou friends, and family and home, and food and raiment, and the comforts of life? Hast thou wherewith to aid in all good and generous works? It is all owing to the love and bounty of Christ. Dost

thou hope to die safely, to escape hell, and get to heaven? It can only be through the love of Christ. And dost thou now cherish a good hope, a cheerful confidence, and an inspiring zeal? Art thou not indebted for them all to the love of Christ? Oh, think then of Christ in his infinite claims, and his infinite deservings. Think of him as he was, as he is, and as he ever shall be; of all he has done, is now doing, and will throughout eternity do for your soul. Think of his infinite loveliness, grace, and tender compassion; of what you owe him, what you need from him, and what you confidently expect from him; of the price he paid for you, the work to which he has appointed you, and the reward he has in reserve for you; of the consolation you have found in him during all past trials and in all present sorrows, and which shall also be your stay in all future tribulations. Think that the time past is gone, and can no more be made to praise and glorify him; that it is only in what remains of this fleeting life and in this fallen world, that you can testify for him, and teach, or preach, or give, or suffer in his name.

Oh, the height and the depth, the length and

the breadth of that love of Christ which passeth knowledge! Christian, let this love of Christ fill, fire, control, and constrain you to a hearty, heavenly love for souls. Remember who and what you once were; who came to your rescue; the home and the height of happiness to which Christ has brought you; that others are still floating on the billows insensible to their danger; that on that wrecked vessel from which you have been saved, there are others faint, perishing, and unable even to cry for mercy; and that in that cage of unclean birds to which Satan decoys his victims, there are still many captives lured by the wiles of their great adversary; and be thou to all that are lost and perishing what Christ and Christ's servants have been to thee.

"We have somewhere read," says Dr. Guthrie, "of a traveller who stood one day beside the cages of some birds that, exposed for sale, ruffled their sunny plumage on the wires, and struggled to be free. A wayworn and sunbrowned man, like one returned from foreign lands, he looked wistfully and sadly on these captives till tears started in his eye, and turning round to their owner, he asked the price of

one, paid it in strange gold, and opening the cage, set the prisoner free. And thus he did with captive after captive, till every bird was away, soaring to the skies and singing on the wings of liberty. The crowd stared, and stood amazed. They thought him mad, till to the question of their curiosity he replied, 'I was once myself a captive; I know the sweets of liberty.'" And so they who have experience of guilt, have felt the serpent's bite, the burning poison in their veins—who on the one hand have the sting of conscience, on the other the peace of faith, the joys of hope, the love, the light, the liberty, the life, that are found in Jesus—they, not excepting heaven's highest angels, are the fittest to preach a Saviour, to plead with man for God, or to plead with God for man.

"During a heavy storm off the coast of Spain, a dismasted merchantman was observed by a British frigate drifting before the gale. Every eye and glass were on her, and a canvas shelter on a deck almost level with the sea, suggested the idea that there yet might be life on board. With all his faults, no man is more alive to humanity than the rough and hardy

mariner; and so the order instantly sounds to put the ship about, and presently a boat puts off with instructions to bear down upon the wreck. Away after that drifting hulk go these gallant men through the swell of a roaring sea: they reach it; they shout; and now a strange object rolls out of that canvas screen against the lee shroud of a broken mast. Hauled into the boat, it proves to be the trunk of a man, bent head and knees together, so dried and shrivelled as to be hardly felt within the ample clothes, and so light that a mere boy lifted it on board. It is laid on the deck. In horror and pity the crew gather round it. It shows signs of life. They draw nearer. It moves, and then mutters—mutters in deep, sepulchral voice, '*There is another man.*' Saved himself, the first use the saved one made of speech was to seek to save another. O learn that blessed lesson. Be daily practising it. And so long as in our homes, among our friends, in this wreck of a world which is drifting down to ruin, there lives an unconverted one, '*there is another man*,' let us go to that man and plead for Christ—go to Christ and plead for that man with the earnest cry, 'Lord, save

me, I perish,' changed into one as welcome to a Saviour's ear, 'Lord, save them, they perish!'"

Love delights in difficulties, and strengthens under them. The more a Christian suffers and sacrifices for Christ, the more he loves him; and the more he loves him, the more ready is he to be offered up in the service of a living consecration unto him. To be a partaker with Christ in any thing, is to the Christian a privilege and a pleasure. He cannot be happy where Christ is not, nor in any employment which looks not to his glory. Enjoyment without his smile ceases to delight, and sorrow irradiated by it becomes bright. The meanest services performed for Christ afford higher satisfaction than the most applauded public duties of the world; and the shame, reproach, and contempt with which such offices are regarded, are of more estimation than all the honor that cometh from man. Love delights in communion, conformity, and assimilation. Therefore it is that the Christian can glory in all shame, obloquy, and trials, because they drive him nearer to Christ, because they bring Christ nearer to him; and because, while they make him a par-

taker of Christ's sufferings, they make him also a partaker of Christ's glory.

"Saviour of the sin-sick soul,
Healer of the broken heart,
Come, and every grief control,
Shine, if mine indeed thou art
Bid me thus no longer pine,
All is mine, if I am thine.

"Mourn I for earth's fading pleasures,
Seek I there for peace and ease?
Are not mine immortal treasures?
World, thy charms no more can please:
Give me but thy love divine,
All is mine, if I am thine:

"Mine those streams of grace unbounded,
Hid in Christ, the Lamb of God;
Mine those depths of love unsounded,
Mine the ransom of thy blood.
O, thou true immortal Vine,
All is mine, if I am thine."

CHAPTER XXII.

ALL THINGS NEEDFUL IN CHRIST.

Well may the love of Christ, singly and alone, be an all-sufficient motive to live and "work the work of God," because the love of Christ "passeth knowledge," and his claims transcend all computation. He made you. He endowed you with all your powers of body and mind, being the "light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." He, by his interposition, preserved you from the instantaneous and unmitigated execution of the sentence, "In the day thou sinnest thou shalt surely die." To him you are indebted for that dispensation of probationary mercy you now enjoy; for that long-suffering with which God shows his kindness to the unthankful; for all that is still so beautiful, sublime, and good in nature; for all that is pleasant to the taste, admirable to the eye, melodious to the ear, delightful to the touch, and fragrant to the smell; for all that is blissful in domestic and social life, and for all that is elevating and

refining in literature and art. But greater love than this has he shown you. Lost, he found you; guilty, he was made a curse and a sin-offering for you; in captivity to sin, Satan, death, and hell, he redeemed you, bought you, delivered you from the power of sin, destroyed the dominion of the devil, abolished the curse of death, and opened up to you the way to heaven. These vile bodies he has dignified and made immortal, spiritual, and glorious. This world he has converted into a means of grace, a field of duty, an opportunity for glory and honor, for strife, victory, and a crown of righteousness. The curse of labor he has sanctified, so that by being "diligent in business," with a "fervent spirit serving the Lord," you may, out of the unrighteous and soul-destroying mammon, make to yourself friends, who shall wait as an escort for you to the everlasting habitations.

> "We men that in our morn of youth defy
> The elements, must vanish; be it so!
> Enough, if something from our hands have power
> To live, and act, and serve the future hour."

There is nothing that thou needest for present comfort, hope, and help, and for blessedness hereafter, that thou dost not find in Christ.

United to him, thou becomest a member of his body and a partaker of his life. Thou needest look for no blessing except through him, and thou mayest expect from him all things needful to enjoy. In him are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," that he may be to you the constant source of a wisdom which is from above, pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, and profitable to direct, to instruct, to correct, to reprove, and thoroughly to furnish for every good work. He has become "the end of the law," by fulfilling its precepts and enduring its penalty, that he might be to you "an everlasting righteousness." He has sent his Holy Spirit to convince, convert, sanctify, and make meet for an inheritance among the saints in light, that he might be to your soul sanctification. That he might be a very present help to you in every time of need, he has promised to be with you always, even unto the end. To secure for you repentance and remission of sins, he ever lives at the right hand of God. Faith is his gift; and as he is its author, so is he its finisher. Peace too he gives—his own peace—a peace which, like the ark, rides in

ease and safety amid all the tumultuous fluctuations of earthly things. Joy also is his blessing, a "joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and this joy no man taketh from you. Is contentment indispensable to happiness? He will teach you how, in whatsoever state you are, to be therein content. Is patience an essential element of happiness? He will make you patient even in tribulations, and enable you to glory in them, rejoicing in hope. Is confidence towards God, and a sweet assurance not only that he is wise and good, but that he makes all his providence work together for your best interests and highest happiness—is this a balm for every wound, a refuge from every enemy, a shelter from every stormy blast, and consolation in every distress? "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

And do you need strength to enable you to apply and appropriate to yourself according to your need these priceless blessings? He is mighty to save; he gives power to become "a son of God;" he gives strength to the faint, and makes his grace sufficient for you. Is there any thing else you require to complete your

safety and happiness? Christ is "redemption," "all in all;" and you are "complete in him," knowing in whom you have believed, that he is faithful and cannot deny himself, and will keep that which you have committed unto him against the day of death, judgment, and eternity. And do you fear lest after all, something, you know not what, may separate you from Christ, and leave you helpless and hopeless? Christ has provided even for this distress. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than

conquerors through Him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"'I know that my Redeemer lives;'
What comfort this sweet sentence gives:
He lives, he lives who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living Head!

"He lives, triumphant from the grave;
He lives, eternally to save;
He lives all-glorious in the sky,
He lives exalted there on high.

"He lives to bless me with his love,
He lives to plead for me above;
He lives, my hungry soul to feed,
He lives to help in time of need.

"He lives to grant me fresh supply,
He lives to guide me with his eye;
He lives to comfort me when faint,
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

"He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to stop and wipe my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.

"He lives, my kind, wise, heavenly Friend.
He lives, and loves me to the end;
He lives, and while he lives I 'll sing;
He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

"He lives, and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare,
He lives to bring me safely there.

"He lives—all glory to his name!—
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;
Oh the sweet joy this sentence gives,
'I know that my Redeemer lives!'"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHRISTIAN EARNESTLY URGED TO WORK.

WHAT manner of person, then, ought you to be? "Multitudes of our species," it has been well said, "are living in such a selfish manner that they are not likely to be remembered after their disappearance. They leave behind them scarcely any traces of their existence, but are forgotten almost as though they had never been. They are, while they live, like one pebble lying unobserved among a million on shore; and when they die, they are like that same pebble thrown into the sea, which just ruffles the surface, sinks, and is forgotten without being missed from the beach. They are neither regretted by the rich, wanted by the poor, nor celebrated by the learned. Who has been the better of their life? Whose tears have they dried up; whose wants supplied; whose miseries have they healed? Who would unbar the gate of life, to readmit them to existence? They did not a particle of good in the world; and none were blessed by them, none could point to them as

the instruments of their redemption; not a word they spoke could be recalled, and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday." Will you thus live and die, O man immortal? Oh no, live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storm of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy, on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten. No, your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind, as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as brightly on the earth as the stars of heaven.

"'Not to myself alone,'
O man, forget not thou—earth's honored priest,
Its tongue, its soul, its life, its pulse, its heart—
In earth's great chorus to sustain thy part!
Chiefest of guests at love's ungrudging feast,
Play not the niggard, spurn thy native clod,
And self disown;
Live to thy neighbor, live unto thy God—
Not to thyself alone."

As Christ is every thing to you, be you every thing to Christ. As Christ, as God and as man,

has given himself for you, both for your body and your soul, that he might thus be such a complete and almighty Saviour as became us, so give yourself to Christ, in body, soul, and spirit, as a free, full, sincere, hearty, loving, and living sacrifice. This will make your life living, and your *work worship*—that is, suitable and worthy of Christ, and acceptable to him—and this will make both happy and assimilating to you, so that you will be changed into Christ's image from glory to glory.

Work then, Christian, work. All things work. In heaven and on earth every thing is working out God's will and the end of its existence. Angels work. Are they not God's ministers "that do his pleasure;" "sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Devils work, yea, with infernal malice going about seeking whom they can destroy, and working out damnation to them that are led captive by them at their will. God works hitherto, that is, from the very beginning of all creation. And even as the Father worketh hitherto, Christ works. The Holy Spirit also works. Oh how earnestly, how omnipotently, and with what omniscient and omnipresent power does

this ever-blessed Spirit work in men to will and to do God's good and gracious pleasure, convincing them of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come. Bad men work. O how deceitfully, and with what desperate wickedness do they work out their own perdition, and that of all they can bewitch.

"And yet they never rest, and yet they never tire."

Good men work. "Many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased." How many, and in how many various ways, and in how many different lands, are at this moment praying, laboring, and striving together for the furtherance of the gospel of Christ, and the destruction of the kingdom of Satan. The spirits of just men made perfect in heaven work. They constitute a great cloud of witnesses to the conflict going on here on earth, and from beneath the altar evermore and earnestly they pray, "How long, O Lord?"

Work then, Christian, work. The kingdom of heaven, if it is ever taken by yourself, or by those perishing children and friends around you, must be taken by "violence," for "the violent take it by force." The contest is sharp and terrible. You war not merely against flesh and

blood, against pride and passion, against lust and avarice, against vice and hypocrisy, but against spiritual wickedness in high places, against the powers of darkness, against influences which are the most potent when least felt and least dreaded. Work then, Christian, with all your might. Contend earnestly. Agonize and wrestle even unto blood, striving against sin in your own heart, and endeavoring by every means in your power to rescue other sinners as brands from the burning. You have but a day in which to work at all.

"No room for mirth or trifling here,
For worldly hopes or worldly fear,
If life so soon is gone;
If now the Judge is at the door,
And all mankind must stand before
The inexorable throne.

"No matter what my thoughts employ,
A moment's misery or joy;
But Oh, when both shall end,
Where shall I find my destined place?
Shall I my everlasting days
With fiends, or angels, spend?"

Work, Christian, work. Your strength may soon fail you, and then you shall not any longer be able to work. The opportunity for doing

any thing for God, for Christ, for your own soul, for your family, for the church, for perishing sinners around you, and for perishing millions abroad, will soon be for ever gone. Already, perhaps, the morning has passed, noon has elapsed, and evening draweth nigh. The sun slopes his course. Shadows begin to multiply and lengthen from every object around you. Soon the sun will descend below the horizon, your eyes will become dim, every thing will be obscured in darkness, and as the damp, cold vapors chill your frame, your senses will be closed, your limbs laid to rest, and you must yield yourself to the sleep of death.

"'Hurrying on, hurrying on!'
Says a voice that speaks from the works of God;
And the rolling spheres, as they flame along
O'er the glorious paths of the great untrod
Take up the sound, and the strain prolong;
Nor cease they from chanting the mighty song,
We are hurrying, hurrying on.

"'Hurrying on, hurrying on!'
Says the voice of time, and his stealthy feet
Are crossing the threshold, unbid, unseen,
And urging us on at each pulse's beat
From the past to the future—the pause between
Is the fleeting *now*—the feverish dream
Of the life that is hurrying on.

"Hurrying on, hurrying on!
The busy throng of city and town,
The peaceful tiller of rural glades,
The warrior thirsting for bloody renown,
The prince and the beggar, however arrayed,
Together approaching the solemn shade,
Are hurrying, hurrying on.

"Hurrying on, hurrying on!
The myriads that walk on this busy stage,
With youth's gay trip, with man's firm tread,
And the trembling steps of hoary age,
In untroubled sleep to lay their head
With the ghostly tribes, the slumbering dead,
They are hurrying, hurrying on."

Work, Christian, work. Even if the day of life lengthens out, and the twilight is clear and bright, the night of sorrow, sickness, and affliction cometh upon you, or even now perhaps envelops you in clouds and mist and sleety rain. The days of darkness will surely come upon you, for "man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." But be not discouraged. Work, and work manfully. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." It is not total darkness. There is still some light, even though it be but starlight. The sun will again arise, burst through these intervening clouds, and shine upon you from on high. Walk

then as a child of the light, as born to greatest things, and aspiring to heaven itself. You have light enough to discern the wiles of Satan, the wickedness that is in the world through covetousness and lust, and the path of duty. While therefore the children of darkness lie entombed in its midnight gloom, sleeping the sleep of death, awake, and give yourself no rest till the morning breaketh. As this is the path of duty, so it is most surely the way of peace, consolation, and joy. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light."

Work then, Christian, work. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure, and this so much the more as you see the night approaching.

> "How slight and short are man's resolves at longest;
> How weak at strongest!
> Oh, if a sinner, held by God's firm hand,
> Can hardly stand,
> Good God, in what a desperate case are they
> That have no stay!"

Work, Christian, work. There is, no doubt, *associated work* for you to do. You must do your work as part of the world's great whole, or as

a member of some body. But you have special work to do as one individual, who, by God's plan and appointment, have a separate position, separate responsibilities, and a separate work—a work which if you do not do must be left undone. No one of your fellows can do that special work for you which you have come into the world to do. He may do a higher work, a greater work, but he cannot do *your* work. You cannot hand your work over to him, any more than you can hand over your responsibilities or your gifts. Nor can you delegate your work to any association of men, however well-ordered and powerful. They have their own work to do, and it may be a very noble one, but they cannot do your work for you. You must do it with those hands, or with those lips, which God has given to you. Whether it be little or much that he requires of you, *that* matters not to the point now in hand—it must be your own work. And by doing your own work, poor as it may seem to some, you shall receive your reward. Christ will acknowledge it; and though small as the giving of a cup of cold water, he will graciously and gloriously recompense it a hundred-fold.

"I have not wealth, or power, or skill,
To broadcast all around:
The world's wide field I may not till,
Nor sow its fallow ground;
But LITTLE SPOTS are here and there,
Which I may weed of grief or care."

Work, Christian, work. The enemy soweth tares in thy field which are ever springing up to choke the good seed of the word, and kill thy most fragrant and promising buds. Work continually. Break up the fallow ground with the ploughshare of godly repentance. Sow the seed, and withhold not thy hand. Sow plentifully, that you may reap abundantly. Sow beside all waters. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that." Cast thy bread-seed even upon the waters, for after many days thou shalt find it again. Sow, for the rain cometh down and watereth the earth, that thy seed may bring forth abundantly. Sow in hope, for God giveth to every seed its own body, and to all an increase, to some thirty, to some sixty, and to some a hundred-fold.

Work, Christian, work. In every place: when thou liest down, and when thou risest up;

when thou goest out, and when thou comest in; at the table, at the fireside, by the wayside, by the well of water, on land, in the ship, and on the mountains, work. Open thy lips, speak a word in season; be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in thee with meekness and fear; in wisdom reproving, counselling, and comforting, and everywhere declaring the word of the gospel.

Work, Christian, in the order of duty. First take heed to thyself. Keep diligently thine own vineyard. Let no day pass without self-examination. While it is yet day, and the shadows of evening invite to meditation, commune with your own heart and be still. Let God be heard, and thy own conscience bear witness, and accuse or else excuse thee. Recount God's mercies and your responsibilities. Think of all you should have done, what you have done, and what you have not done. Inquire whether your thoughts have been sequestered to God; strangers from the world, fixed on heaven; whether just, charitable, lowly, pure, Christian; whether your senses have been guided, neither to let in temptations, nor to let out sins; whether your speech has not been

offensive, vain, rash, indiscreet, unsavory, unedifying; whether your actions have been warrantable, expedient, comely, profitable. Thence see if you have been negligent in watching your heart, and expense of your time, exercises of devotion, performance of good works, resistance of temptations, good use of good examples; and compare your present estate with the former. Look jealously whether your soul hath gained or lost—lost aught of the heat of her love, tenderness of conscience, fear to offend, strength of virtue; gained more increase of grace, more assurance of glory. And when you find—alas, who can but find?—either holiness decayed, or evil done, or good omitted, cast down your eyes, strike your breast, humble your soul, and sigh to Him whom you have offended; sue for pardon as for life, heartily, yearningly; enjoin yourself careful amendment, redouble your holy resolutions, strike hands with God in a new covenant of more entire and perfect obedience. Bethink thee also of thy family. Thou art to it, in Christ's stead, a prophet to instruct, a priest to intercede, and a king to rule, guard, and direct. Encircle also, in thy self-examination, the wider sphere of

thy business, thy church, and the world, that thou mayest know whether thou hast, in regard to each, done good to all men as thou hast had opportunity.

Work, Christian, work with all thy heart. The heart is the seat of natural life, because there the blood in which the life is, having been restored and invigorated, is propelled with life-giving energy and heat to every part of the body. So it is with the spiritual life. It is seated and purified and quickened, not in the head, not in the understanding, not in the will, but in the heart, the disposition, desires, and affections, and preëminently in LOVE. Keep thy heart then with all diligence, for out of it proceed the issues of life, activity, and health, or of sloth, inactivity, and death.

Work with thy might, whatsoever thy hands find to do. Whether thy talents be one or many, lay them well out. Hide none in a napkin. Stand not idle. Sit not down to take thine ease. In this hive every bee is meant for a working bee, and there are no drones. Faith that does not work, soon languishes and dies. Even love itself grows cold, and hope and joy languish. Be not slothful. Say not within thy-

self, I am but feeble, and can do little. Thou knowest not how much thou canst do except by working with thy might. If thou canst not tower as a cedar in Lebanon, thou canst be a tree of the Lord, planted by the river, whose leaf never withereth, and whose fruit never faileth. If thou canst not be a corner-stone, thou canst be a living stone, bearing up thy proportion of weighty duty. If thou canst not be the head, thou canst be a member, and secure the health and activity of the body by rendering that service which every limb and joint supplieth. If thou canst not give gold and silver, thou canst give time and prayer and effort. If thou canst not be a large and fruitful tree, thou canst be a shrub, a flower, a stock of corn or of wheat. Thou canst thyself plant the seed which shall become the largest of trees, and open up that spring whose flowing waters, increasing to a rill, a stream, a river, shall make fruitful the whole vineyard of the Lord. Even when you can no longer work with the hands, you can work with the lips. You can still talk and write and give for Christ. You can bless and magnify his name, and speak good of it. You can tell others what a Saviour you have

found, what he has done for your soul, and how precious he may become to them. Like a dying missionary, who was urged to refrain from speaking, you can say, "I feel that I must talk. My time is short, and I must spend it for Christ. We ought to do all we can to glorify him, who has done so much for us."

"There is work to be done in this world of ours,
This world of sorrow and sin;
There is work for the hands with their wonderful powers,
And work for the spirit within.

"There is work for the beggar, and work for the prince,
There is work for the old and the young,
The merchant with millions, the cripple with pence,
The learned with pen and with tongue.

"The statesman, the newsboy, the preacher, the muse,
Physicians, and printers, and all,
May work with their head, or their hands, or their purse,
In kitchen, or workshop, or hall.

"There is work in the by-ways and alleys at home,
Where suffering and want hold their throne;
There 's work far away mid the thousands who roam
Where the blest lamp of life never shone.

"There are tears to be dried, there are wounds to be healed,
Earth's wrongs and oppressions redressed,
Faint hearts to be cheered, and proud brows made to yield,
And a sin-stricken world to be blessed:

"There are fatherless babes to be nurtured and fed,
And the brow of old age to be soothed,
The wayward and erring to Christ to be led,
And the pillow of pain to be smoothed.

"Then rouse thee, my soul, to thy labor away,
Since life for this mission is given;
Like Jesus, thy Master, while yet it is day,
Work the will of thy Father in heaven.

"Go forth in the morning, at noon, and at night,
Seek the dwelling of age, and of youth;
Error's weeds to uproot with the ploughshare of light,
And scatter the bright seeds of truth.

"Bring hope to the fainting, and joy to the sad,
And Christ to the penitent soul;
Fill earth with rejoicing, bid deserts be glad,
And streams through the wilderness roll."

Work, Christian, work with all the means in thy power. How abundant are they in this day of the Lord. Thou canst not want assistance adapted to thy strength and capacity. The fly-sheet, the tract, the primer, the little volume, the large volume, and the precious Bible itself, thou canst draw plentifully, cheaply, or even gratuitously out of those wells of salvation which are the glory of our age, and the flowers and fruit of its Christian union, charity, and zeal—the Bible Society, the Tract

Society, the Sunday-school Union, and others. Here you can find what will suit the taste, and delight the eyes and the heart of young and old, poor and rich. In distributing these precious volumes to the poor, in searching out the neglected and guiding them to Christ, and in laboring in the Sabbath-school, feeding Christ's lambs, and training his children, thou canst fill thy heart with blessing, thy hands with work, and thy life with usefulness and glory.

Work, Christian, work; for if you do not work, you give fearful evidence of not being a Christian at all. Faith works. Work is the evidence of life. Whatever lives works. On the earth, in the air, in the sea, whatever hath life has motion and activity adapted to its nature, capacity, and habits. As surely as you find a bird that does not fly or sing, a fish that does not swim, or an insect that does not creep or prepare by rest for more perfect motion and activity, there you find death. Life has become extinct. And thus does faith work. God the Holy Ghost works in the dead sinner's soul and quickens it, that, according to the will and order of God, it may do "the work of God." No sooner is he made alive,

than God sends the Christian into his vineyard to work. Whenever, therefore, a Christian is found taking his ease in Zion, there is fearful hazard of his sleeping, like the Alpine traveller, the sleep of death. Faith works, and it works by love—not from constraint, but willingly, eagerly and delightfully. Nothing but death can paralyze the energy and activity of love. Nay, love is stronger than death, for even in death it will burn and brighten, and blaze into tenfold ardor and ecstasy of devotion. Throughout all creation love is the spring of mightiest efforts, and of superhuman heroism. And as a workless Christian must be a loveless Christian, he is by both characteristics declared to be dead; for faith without love and works is dead.

Work, Christian, work; for if you do not work, even if not absolutely dead, you are assuredly not in health. There is disease. There is danger. You are in the way of death. You are dying. The process has commenced, and by its own progress it can only terminate in death. It is not, in spiritual life, as it is in physical. There is in it no *vis naturæ*. There is no inherent healing power in spiritual life to

renew and restore itself, and to throw off foul and putrid disease. Lust of any kind when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is matured, bringeth forth death. This is the invariable, the inevitable law of spiritual life in sinful and corrupt human nature. And as work is the evidence of life, so torpidity is the evidence of disease. Sloth in the Christian is always sin. It is the sure proof that the vital energies have become benumbed, either by cold or by the morbific influence of inward stupefying selfishness, sensuality, or worldliness. Would you then have your soul prosper, and be in health? work is the means of preserving health. Would you be hearty and strong, as well as healthy? work is the source of strength. Would you be happy as well as healthy? work is the inseparable handmaid and companion of happiness. Would you be holy as well as happy? give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the work of the Lord, but that you shall have your "fruit unto holiness."

"Lord, with thee, in daily dying,
May we die, and with thee rise;
And on earth, ourselves denying,
Have our hearts within the skies."

Work then, Christian, work. Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. What a work to build a great city! said Ashton, a few evenings after his return from a visit to New York. "It is a great deal to build *one* brick house; but New York has rows of brick houses, and not only rows, but streets; and not only streets, but it has miles and acres of brick buildings. To *build* a city!" Ashton could think of nothing to compare it with. It *is* a vast work, but then it is all done by simply laying *one brick on another*. And so all great work is done. It is by laying together, piling up, and cementing the little industries of the minutes. Great wealth is the sum of pennies. Great learning grows by adding one little lesson to another. Great excellence is built, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little of the knowledge and the grace of God. And so is great good accomplished by little and little. Every good thought and word and wish and purpose and action, suggested

and perfected in the love of Christ, is a brick laid on the good foundation laid up against the time to come; another coin added to your treasure reserved in heaven; another gem added to your crown of righteousness; another string to your harp of glory; and another work that shall follow you with its "honor and immortality and eternal life."

Work then, Christian, work. Rich or poor, high or low, are but the transient distinctions between waves that perish in the deep, and those that roll crested and towering to the shore. We are all but waves on the ocean of life—

> "So hurry we right onward thoughtlessly,
> Unto the coast of the eternal land,
> Where, like the worthless billows in their glee,
> We melt at once into eternity."

Work for Christ on earth, when death terminates it, is finished. But it must stand. Nay, it must grow. Eternal life is not simply a resuscitation, but the budding and evolution of a new life previously implanted in the believer. Where that is not, men rise even as they had lived, "unto damnation." The life of every man is *one* in this world and the next, one

unbroken thread which God has joined in vital continuity. The resurrection is its completion.

"Arise, and come to Jesus;
He calleth thee to-day:
The busy crowd are thronging
The broad and easy way;
No loitering in the footpath,
No dallying there with sin;
The narrow gate is open,
Arise, and enter in.

"Arise, and follow Jesus,
Wherever he may lead;
Though rough the path, or stormy,
Press on with all thy speed.
His feet were torn and bleeding
Who trod the path for thee;
But where his rest remaineth
He is, and thou shalt be.

"Arise, and dwell with Jesus,
The end is drawing nigh;
Who taught thee how to journey,
Now teacheth how to die.
Firm in his strength relying,
Yield up thy latest breath;
Then rise with him triumphant,
The conqueror of death."

Work, Christian, work. That which your heart now devises, and your hands find to do, may be your last work. There may be but a

step between you and death, and you may say with the young man of whom Dr. Spencer gives such a touching history, "I am a dying man. I stand on the verge of time now. I feel that the grave-digger is at the side of me. Another time, sir; another time! You astonish me. *You* may talk of time. But if I should be talking of time, death would laugh at me, and call me fool and liar. Earth has done with me. The grave lifts up her voice to claim me. I am preparing to say, Yes, I come."

Work, Christian, work, for God giveth thee good wages. He asks no man to work for naught. He giveth liberally, a hundred-fold in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting.

"What a heritage were this!
An eternity of bliss,
Heaven below, and heaven above;
O the miracle of love!

"'Abba, Father,' then might I
Through the Holy Spirit cry;
Heir of GOD, with CHRIST joint-heir,
Grace and glory called to share.

"Can a worm such gifts receive?
Fear not, faint not, but believe;
He who gave his Son, shall he
Any good withhold from thee?"

Work, Christian, work, for the night bringeth rest. How sweet is pleasure after pain. How pleasant, after a day of weary toil, to lay our bodies down upon our own delightful beds; and how more than happy is the rest of home, after the vicissitudes and fatigues of long and painful travel. But what is there of rest on earth that can fully symbolize that rest which remaineth for the people of God? All rest here must be fitful, short, disturbed by fearful dreams and oft-recurring pain, sickness, and misery. Thou mayest here have some little rest, but no repose; for even within thyself thou hast enough to make thee weary, and thy life loathsome and painful—ever sinning and ever presuming, sinning even when thou hast repented with tears and while thy tears are still upon thy cheeks—

> "The spirit is faint with its feverish strife;
> Oh, for its home in the upper life!
> When, when will death draw nigh?"

But in heaven thou wilt say, "It is good to be here! let me abide here!" In heaven's eternal mansions there is rest—full, final, perfect, satisfying, and eternal rest: rest for the body and rest for the soul; rest from toil and from

trouble; rest from sin and from sorrow; rest from all fears and anxieties and doubts and darkness; rest from longing and pining desires, and rest in loving delight; rest from faith and penitence and prayer, and rest in the vision and fruition of God himself. It is rest, not with the few dying and sin-tainted friends who make earth home, and this life happy. It is rest with all thy dear parents, brothers, children, and friends—not lost, but gone before—now all glorious, all made perfect, and thou thyself also perfect and glorious. It is rest where there will be nothing in others unamiable or unlovely; and where thou thyself, having put off this body of selfishness and sin, shalt have nothing in thee to cool the ardor of their affection, or diminish the extent of mutual, and ever-during delight. It is rest with those blessed spirits who here ministered unto thee, and had charge over thee; whom thou seest not now, but shalt then both see and know, and be made like them, and love and live with them. It is rest with God and in God, and with the whole family of God. It is rest in employments that will never weary, and in enjoyments that will never cloy. It is rest for

ever with the Lord, with him whom thy soul now longeth for, and in the faith and hope of whom thou now livest and laborest. Then thou shalt see him, and thine eyes shall behold him; and beholding his face in righteousness, and being ever with him, thou shalt be satisfied, being changed into his image, and glorified with his glory.

"'For ever with the Lord!'
Amen; so let it be:
Life from the dead is in that word,
'T is immortality.

"Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home.

"My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how near
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy golden gates appear!

"Ah, then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above."

I beseech you therefore, dear reader, by the mercies of God, now to gird up the loins of your mind with the solemn determination that,

relying on divine help for assistance, you will devote body, soul, and spirit, life and energy, time and talents, influence and affluence, to finish the work given you to do, and to do which your life is prolonged.

Are you rich? you will soon be where they are who, while living, made themselves the benefactors of coming ages, and who will ever live in the memory of grateful hearts, and in the ever-living and ever useful monuments of their wisdom and charity—and your opportunity of doing likewise will then be gone.

Have you means and money without great wealth? be your own executor and almoner. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase." Give to him that asketh thee, as God has prospered thee: not grudgingly, but cheerfully, systematically, prayerfully, faithfully, as a steward, not an owner. Give to every good work according to the order and proportion of duty. And when you come to make your will, let your will in death be what ought now to be your will in life; that is, not *your will*, but the will of Him who made you the dispenser of gold and silver which are the Lord's; so that wheth-

er you live or die, you and all you have may be the Lord's.

"Do what thou hast to do,
While thou hast eyes to see,
While yet thine ears can hear the word
That wisdom speaks to thee;
While thou hast power to walk,
While thou hast voice to pray,
While thou hast reason's guiding lamp
To understand thy way.

"Do what thou hast to do,
And not to others leave;
They may thy wishes overrule,
Thy motives misconceive,
Thy purposes contest,
Thy plans with coldness view:
Now, while the life-tide warms thy breast,
Do what thou hast to do.

"Do what thou hast to do,
Before the night of gloom,
That swiftly wraps the sons of men
In darkness and the tomb;
For though thy feet may tread
On blossoms bright with dew,
Behold, the grave is for thee spread;
Do what thou hast to do."

Are you poor in this world's goods? still give of thy little, that the riches of thy liber-

ality may abound even out of the depths of thy poverty, and be welcomed and greatly blessed by Him who accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. You will soon be with the Harlan Pages and others who have shown that there is no position in society so humble, and no means so limited, but that, with the desire and determination to do good, they may become the centre of extensive and permanent influence—and your opportunity, like theirs, of winning souls to Christ, and of shining as a star in the firmament of heaven, will soon be for ever past.

Are you a minister? you will soon be with Leighton and Baxter and Flavel and Payson and McCheyne and Brainerd and Edwards and Martyn and others who here watched for souls as they that must give account, and whose works yet live to follow them in the ingathering of unnumbered souls who shall be their crown of rejoicing throughout eternity—and soon, very soon your blessed precious opportunity of spending and being spent for Christ, will be for ever ended.

"Let Zion's watchmen all awake,
And take the alarm they give;
Now let them from the mouth of God,
Their solemn charge receive.

"'Tis not a cause of small import,
The pastor's care demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands.

"They watch for souls, for which the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego;
For souls which must for ever live
In raptures, or in woe.

"All to the great tribunal haste,
The account to render there;
And shouldst thou strictly mark our faults,
Lord, how should we appear?

"May they that Jesus whom they teach,
Their own Redeemer see;
And watch Thou daily o'er their souls,
That they may watch for thee."

Are you ignorant and uneducated? you will soon be with Poor Joseph, the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, the Young Cottager, and a host of others who by their piety, patience, and earnest zeal for the salvation of their brethren, glorified God upon earth; and you may now by your example serve your generation, do good to those around you, and be a

means of saving their souls from death—but soon all such opportunities will cease to you for ever.

Are you young? thousands while young have become the servants of Christ, and have been made instrumental in leading others much older and wiser than themselves, to seek and serve the Lord. Mr. Stephen Paxson was led into the Sunday-school by his own child; there he learned to read; attended, as a scholar, four years; received his first impressions of religion from the books of the library; was converted; became a teacher, a superintendent, a volunteer organizer of Sunday-schools; and finally, a missionary of the American Sunday-school Union. In six years and a half of labor, in fifteen counties of Illinois, and twenty-eight counties in Missouri, he organized 502 new Sunday-schools, with 3,575 teachers, and 21,350 scholars; reorganized 100 schools, having 671 teachers, and 4,075 scholars; visited and aided 130 schools, having 820 teachers and 5,200 scholars.

"Live then, dear youth, as in His sight,
And on your humble way
Walk in the liberty of light,
As children of the day.

"Young though you be, and in the prime
Of life's unfolding powers,
Of all the moments of your time,
This, only this is yours."

Let then your solemn purpose be,

"I seize it, Lord, before 't is past;
I yield myself to thee;
Thine be my earliest years, my last,
And my eternity."

Are you old? be not old in purpose and desire to work and to do good, but being like David planted in the house of the Lord, still flourish in the courts of our God, to show by your meek, quiet, patient, and thankful spirit, and by your readiness to do good, that the Lord is upright, and that he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. Still say, like Newton, when old, weary, and bereaved, "I am the Lord's, and I am still willing to live his appointed time. I am like a laborer in harvest, who does not wish to leave the fields till he has finished his day's work, yet who looks now and then at the sun, and is glad to see the approach of evening, that he may rest." "I have used all diligence in the study of the Bible since my seventeenth

year," said the venerable Bede. His last work was a translation of the gospel of St. John into his native tongue, and nothing can be more touching than the closing scenes of the life of this faithful servant of the Lord. His prayerful, thankful spirit made every breath a hymn of praise to his Redeemer, and caused him to adore God for the sickness under which his life was fast ebbing away. All around him wept, chiefly for that he said that in this world they should see his face no more. But they rejoiced in that he said, "It is time that I go to my Creator; I have lived long enough, the time of my departure is at hand, for I long to depart and be with Christ." He sang, "Glory to thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;" and when he had named the Holy Ghost he breathed his last breath.

Are you healthy and strong? I write unto you that are strong, that you may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, fighting manfully the good fight of faith, quitting yourself like a man, and being strong to labor with all might and earnestness for the furtherance of every good word and work.

Are you sickly? remember Baxter and

Doddridge and Watts and Calvin, and thousands besides, who out of weakness were made strong, in pain powerful, in sickness sanctified, and under the pressure of continual heaviness and suffering, were rendered mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong-holds of sin and Satan.

Whoever and whatever you are, if a Christian, then you are Christ's, and all you have is from him. Life is only life when it is lived to Christ. Death is truly blessed only when it is in the Lord. Whether therefore you live, live unto the Lord; or whether you die, die unto the Lord; that whether living or dying, you may be the Lord's.

My dear reader, the last day of that life which you now live in the flesh shall soon assuredly dawn and darken and close for ever.

"Now it is gone. Our brief hours travel post,
Each with its thought or deed, its why or how:
But know, each parting hour gives up a ghost,
To dwell within thee an eternal now."

Oh what an emphasis of love and feeling does it give to any thing, that it is "the last."

"The last! the last! the end!
Oh by that little word
How many thoughts are stirred;
That sister of the past.

"Last hours with parting dear ones—
That time the fastest spends—
Last tears in silence shed,
Last words half uttered,
Last looks of dying friends.

"Oh precious, precious moments—
The saddest, sweetest, dearest,
Because they are the nearest
To an eternal close."

Nature sympathizing with this feeling of the heart, often renders the last the sweetest and most beautiful—the last flower that blooms; the last tree that withers; the last leap of the mountain stream in the foaming cataract; the last harvest-home; the last curl of the breaking wave ere it sinks into foam; the last rays of the setting sun; and the last hour of evening twilight. At this solemn hour, before leaving the world to darkness, how does the sun gild with beauty every ragged mountain peak, every leaf of every tree, every lovely flower; and

"To gold converteth, one by one,
The ripples of the mighty river,
Till hill and vale with radiance glowing,
The world around us seems to be
Sleeping in bright tranquillity."

Thus may it be now with thee, dear reader, in this our last interview. You have now reached the last pages of this little book, and are reading its last words of exhortation and entreaty, and receiving from it the last impressions for good or evil. It is now the last of the season in which I write. The summer is ended, and the harvest is past. It is with me the last of a not very long, though a laborious life. I write within sight of the four last events on which hang the eternal destiny of men: death, which must soon come to me and to you; judgment after death, which will determine the retributions of eternity; heaven, whose glorious consummation will be contemporaneous with the general judgment and the resurrection of the body; and hell, to which that final judgment will also be a conductor. This may be my last work for the purity, power, and spiritual vitality of the kingdom of my ever-blessed Redeemer. And, my dear friend, it may be the

last warning, encouragement, and exhortation you may be permitted to receive. Let it sink with due solemnity into your inmost heart. Close not the book without a heart-searching review of it, and of your life and labors. And kneeling in the presence of Him who has called you, and will soon judge you, ratify before him this unalterable vow.

"Lord, I am thine, entirely thine,
Purchased and saved by blood divine;
With full consent thine I would be,
And own thy sovereign right in me.

"Grant one poor sinner more a place
Among the children of thy grace;
A wretched sinner, lost to God,
But rescued by Immanuel's blood.

"Thine I would live, thine would I die,
Be thine through all eternity:
The vow is past beyond repeal;
Now will I set the solemn seal.

"Here at the cross, where flows the blood
That bought my guilty soul for God,
Thee my new Master now I call,
And consecrate to thee my all.

"Do thou assist a feeble worm
The great engagement to perform;
Thy grace can full assistance lend,
And on that grace I dare depend."

"Come, brothers, let us onward;
Night comes without delay,
And in this howling desert
It is not good to stay.
Take courage, and be strong,
We are hastening on to heaven;
Strength for warfare will be given,
And glory won ere long.

"The pilgrims' path of trial
We do not fear to view;
We know His voice who calls us,
We know him to be true.
Then let who will contemn,
But, strong in His almighty grace,
Come every one with steadfast face
On to Jerusalem.

"Oh, brothers, soon is ended
The journey we 've begun;
Endure a little longer,
The race will soon be run.
And in the land of rest—
In yonder bright eternal home,
Where all the Father's loved ones come,
We shall be safe and blest.

"Then boldly let us venture;
This, this is worth the cost,
Though dangers we encounter,
Though every thing is lost.
Oh, world, how vain thy call!
We follow Him who went before,
We follow, to the eternal shore,
Jesus, our all in all."

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